



Safeguarding Policy

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

BFS is committed to ensuring a safe environment for all its students and staff. BFS primarily delivers to students who are over 18 however we do all run short courses for younger students.

Introduction

'Safeguarding' relates to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding legislation requires policy, procedure and preventative measures to be in place to protect young people and vulnerable adults from risk of harm.

All providers of post-16 learning and skills have responsibilities to ensure the safety of children, young people and those adults deemed 'vulnerable'. A vulnerable adult is defined as a person 'who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation' ('No Secrets' Guidance Department of Health, 2000).

Safeguarding of both children and vulnerable adults is of paramount importance and BFS seeks to ensure that a safe learning environment is available to all staff and students

Safeguarding Strategy

The School will:

- Take a proactive approach to protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm or risk of harm.
- Take all appropriate actions to address any concerns about the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults including where there is suspected risk of harm.
- Comply fully with agreed policies and procedures in partnership with other agencies.
- Plan, implement, monitor and review its policies and procedures to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults in the College.
- Take all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to children, young people and vulnerable adult's welfare is minimised by appropriate:
 - Risk assessment and management
 - Health and Safety procedures
 - Staff selection, recruitment, induction supervision and training
 - Responding to and reporting abuse

What is abuse?

Adult abuse is defined as "a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons".

Abuse can take many forms:

- Discriminatory abuse - abuse on grounds of someone's race, disability, gender, sexuality, religious belief, age, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation

- Physical abuse - hitting, pushing, burning, kicking or restraint.
- Psychological abuse - verbal abuse, humiliation, bullying or the use of threats, blaming, isolation or removal from services or supportive networks.
- Financial abuse - illegal or improper use of a person's property, money, pension book, bank account or other belongings.
- Sexual abuse - direct or indirect sexual activity where the vulnerable person cannot or does not give their consent, including rape and sexual assault.
- Neglect - not providing a person with the essential care they need, thus causing them to suffer, and failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services.
- Institutional abuse – which is poor professional practice, including neglect, and which can take the form of isolated incidents or pervasive ill treatment including gross misconduct. This form of abuse is about organisations, their employees and working practices failing to achieve expected standards including recognition of vulnerable groups.

Signs of Abuse

Because children, young people and vulnerable adults may not be able to report abuse themselves, it is important that professionals and volunteers working with those groups recognise signs and symptoms of possible abuse. Staff should be aware of signs of potential abuse *but keep an open mind and not jump to conclusions.*

If a member of staff is unclear whether something is an indicator of abuse he/she should speak to their line manager and the Head of Student Support. A member of staff does not need to be certain that abuse is taking place before reporting it or seeking advice. Staff should be particularly concerned if the vulnerable person appears distressed or frightened in the presence of any professional, volunteer or other learner particularly if that person has a history of violence or other personal problems. Staff should keep a careful record of what they see, what they hear and what they do.

Signs of potential harm or abuse – Note: this list is not definitive and your relationship with a vulnerable person may mean that you are sensitive to changes in their behaviour which are not detailed here but which give you cause for concern

Signs of potential physical abuse: a history of unexplained falls or minor injuries, finger marks, clusters of bruises, untreated medical problems and unexplained weight loss.

Signs of potential sexual abuse: reported or observed pain, bruising, soreness and/or infections, changes in usual behaviour.

Signs of potential psychological/emotional abuse: vulnerable person seems very distressed, confused or unusually withdrawn, appears frightened of care-giver or other person.

Signs of potential financial abuse: unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts, inability to pay bills, an unusual interest in vulnerable person's assets, failure to explain financial transactions by person managing the vulnerable person's money.

Signs of potential neglect: living conditions are filthy/cold, clothing is dirty or inappropriate, the person's health is deteriorating and they are not getting the medical treatment and care they need.

Signs of potential discriminatory abuse: the vulnerable person is excluded from activities; there is no attempt to address their communication needs or provide food or care that meets their cultural needs.

Signs of potential institutional abuse: repeated concerns about poor care or ill-treatment, lack of flexibility about waking/bedtimes, no respect of privacy, poor bedding or heating, lack of individual care planning, inadequate provision and choice of food and drink.

Responsibility for recording and reporting

It is the responsibility of **all** staff working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, to recognise and report abuse to BFS management.

Any individual who witnesses abuse, or hears of it, or learns of a potentially abusive situation in relation to a vulnerable person, must report it to his/her manager or directly to the nominated person in the College. It is never someone else's responsibility.