



SEND PARTNERSHIP SERVICE (SPS) SAFEGUARDING POLICY

As SPS is commissioned by the Local Authority and delivered as an in-house service it is subject to compliance with the Local Authority's over-arching policy on Safeguarding. Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations, agencies and individuals to ensure their functions and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Bath and North East Somerset Safeguarding Children Board has collaborated with 11 other LSCB's in the south west region to produce online the South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures. These are regularly reviewed and updated. They are child protection policies and any local protocols, procedures and policies which support these may be found on LSCB section of this website under 'multi agency policies and procedures'.

<https://www.safeguarding-bathnes.org.uk/children>

In line with statutory guidance services should prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised. SPS uses Safer Recruitment procedures to reduce the likelihood of inappropriate people being employed in positions where they could potentially detrimentally affect a child. This aims to ensure the safety of children through effective recruitment practices that apply to staff and volunteers.

In addition, SPS works with parents and carers who are often vulnerable themselves, with their protection also being paramount. As a result, many of the procedures designed to protect children, will equally serve to protect vulnerable adults.

Underpinning Principles

- The welfare of children and young people is paramount.
- SPS will demonstrate its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at all stages of recruitment and selection.
- The welfare of vulnerable adults is paramount and SPS commits to safeguarding their interests.

SPS provides impartial information, advice and support to children and young people with SEND aged 0 – 25 years, and their parents and carers. Staff and/or volunteers may meet with children, young people and parents and carers in a variety of settings including Local Authority premises, schools, children's centres, colleges, social welfare settings or public venues such as restaurants or cafes. The service maintains an electronic database of contact information which remains confidential to service staff.

Safer Recruitment

- Applicants for the role of volunteer are accepted onto the SPS training programme on the understanding that they may only work for the service in a voluntary capacity, upon receipt of satisfactory references and enhanced DBS clearance for working with children and vulnerable adults.
- Applicants for paid positions will be subject to two satisfactory references and enhanced DBS clearance for working with children and vulnerable adults before confirmation of appointment
- During the application process every effort will be made to check periods of employment, study and gaps in activity to satisfy the interview panel
- Candidates will be asked to provide evidence of identity and their right to live in the UK.
- Each candidate will be asked the same set of questions, pre-determined, as being appropriate to the role of either volunteer or paid staff.
- Interviewing of volunteers may be slightly less formal than for paid staff
- Newly appointed paid staff will undertake a comprehensive Induction programme including modules relating to safeguarding, equalities, data protection, confidentiality and privacy
- Volunteers will complete a formal period of training, a period of role - shadowing with paid staff before being permitted to become active

Allegations of Abuse against members of Staff and Volunteers

In the event of the service receiving any allegations of abuse or concerning behaviour that might indicate unsuitability to work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults against its members of staff or volunteers, this would be immediately reported to the Local Authority's Designated Officer for consideration and possible investigation.