



Safeguarding Policy Statement

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Broadford and Strath Community Company (BSCC) including senior managers and Board of Directors, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect children/young people and vulnerable adults who receive BSCC's services from harm. This includes children of adults who use our services;
- To provide staff and volunteers, as well as children/young people and vulnerable adults and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

BSCC is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children/young people and vulnerable adults in its care. It recognises the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect young people and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy a child is recognised as someone under the age of 18. A young person is anyone aged 16 or 17 years. A vulnerable adult is recognised as a person aged 16 or over who is, or may be for any reason, unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. This could include people with learning difficulties, mental health problems, older people and people with a physical disability or impairment. It may also include victims of domestic abuse, hate crime and anti-social abuse behaviour.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children/young people and vulnerable adults in Scotland. A summary of the key legislation is available from NSPCC (nspcc.org.uk/childprotection) and Social Care Institute for Excellence (<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/>).

BSCC also takes guidelines from the Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child when dealing with matters of child protection. BSCC fully supports keeping the child present at our service, and doing what is best for each child's individual welfare and wellbeing.

BSCC policies and procedures

This policy should be read alongside BSCC's organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

- Role description for the designated safeguarding officer
- Procedures for dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult (see Appendix)
- Procedures for managing allegations against staff and volunteers (see Appendix)
- Making a Referral Policy (PVG scheme)

- Secure Handling of Disclosure Information Policy (PVG scheme)
- Data Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers
- BSCC Corry Capers Behaviour Policy
- Fair and Safe Recruitment Policy
- Social Media Policy (for online safety)
- Managing Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Recording concerns and information sharing guidance
- Photography and sharing images guidance
- Induction, training, supervision and support procedures
- Supervision ratios – as cited in individual Risk Assessments and Corry Capers Care Inspectorate certificate of registration.

Principles

BSCC is fully committed to promoting the rights of children and vulnerable adults, notably their right to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation and to be involved in any decisions that directly affect them. BSCC has a duty of care to implement effective policies and procedures for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people. To achieve this we will ensure our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. Furthermore we will endeavour to keep up to date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children and young people.

We believe that

- Children and vulnerable adults should never experience abuse of any kind
- We have a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults, by a commitment to practice that protects them.

We recognise that

- The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- All children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- Some children and vulnerable adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

This Policy is informed by Scottish Government Health and Social Care Standards set out below (www.gov.scot/publications/health-social-care-standards-support-life/)

Health and Social Care Standards:

3.14 I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.
 3.20 I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. 3.21 I am protected from harm

because people are alert and respond to signs of significant deterioration in my health and wellbeing, that I may be unhappy or may be at risk of harm. 3.22 I am listened to and taken seriously if I have a concern about the protection and safety of myself or others, with appropriate assessments and referrals made.

BSCC will seek to keep children/young people and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
- Appointing designated safeguarding officers for a) children & young people and b) vulnerable adults, along with a deputy safeguarding officer and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding and child protection
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, vulnerable adults, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

BSCC staff and volunteers will:

- Follow this policy at all times when working with young people and vulnerable adults
- Act appropriately around young people and vulnerable adults, and use appropriate language at all times; make physical contact that is in line with the agreed activity only
- Take all reasonably practical steps to avoid spending time alone with a young person or vulnerable adult
- Ensure children and vulnerable people are never left on their own, or in the company of an unknown adult
- Follow the procedures set out below should a young person or vulnerable adult wish to tell you about a matter that concerns them (see Section 4 - Responding to suspicion or allegation of abuse)
- Note that failure to adhere to this policy is a serious issue and may result in the disciplinary process.

Contact details – see overleaf.

Contact details:

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Name: Tracy Keenan

Phone/email: 07939 655783 tracy@broadfordandstrath.org

Deputy Safeguarding Officer(s)

Name(s): Norma Morrison

Phone/email: norma@broadfordandstrath.org

Trustee/Senior lead for safeguarding and child protection

Name: Chair of Board, Neil Hope

Phone/email: neil@broadfordandstrath.org; 07900 886772

Police:

Non-emergency – call 101

Emergency – 999

Local Social Work Team: Numbers available at www.hcpc.scot

Social Work Emergency Service (out of hours): 0808 1753 646

Safeguarding Procedures and Appendices are on following pages.

Status	Initial	Date
Document updated	CD	26.3.26
Agreed and minuted at BSCC Board meeting	CD	31.3.26
Due for review		31.3.27

Safeguarding Procedures

Section 1 – Overview of BSCC activities

BSCC's contact with children/young people and vulnerable adults typically falls into the following categories:

1.1 Unaccompanied children participating in activities organised by BSCC

Examples are: Corry Capers after school and holiday activities, including activities organised by BSCC but taking place off site (e.g. visits). All activities are supervised by trained and PVG checked staff in a staff:child ratio in line with our policy. Children in receipt of DSD payments have 1 to 1 care but in the context of the whole group setting. Certain activities may operate with a 1 adult to 2 children ratio. Children must be dropped off and collected by a responsible adult or parent/guardian. The minimum age is school age. We have a service phone specifically for Corry Capers and personal phones are not used. Parental permission is required for off-site activities. See activity Risk Assessments for further details.

1.2 Families participating in activities organised by BSCC

Examples: Family learning workshops and Whole Family Wellbeing programme. In these cases, BSCC is not 'in loco parentis'. Parents / accompanying adults are required to supervise their children during these activities. These activities are delivered and supervised by trained and PVG checked staff in line with our PVG policies. See activity Risk Assessments for details.

1.3 Public events that children and vulnerable adults may attend

Examples: Open days, fairs. BSCC will exercise duty of care in line with the Risk Assessment for each activity.

1.4 Vulnerable adults participating in activities organised by BSCC

Example: Flourish Together Horticulture for Well-being. These activities are facilitated by trained and PVG checked staff. The supervision ratio depends on the degree of support needed for each participant, as set out in the Risk Assessment. Where necessary an individual's support worker will attend.

1.5 Children and vulnerable adults participating in activities organised by others on our premises

Examples: Portree High School Rural Skills classes / activities; Croilegan Gaelic Nursery use of Corry Capers woodland. The organisation organising the activity is responsible for ensuring adequate supervision and that safeguarding procedures are followed. The BSCC point of contact will request evidence of this.

Section 2 – Procedures Overview

- BSCC is committed to providing a safe environment for children/young people and vulnerable adults. This Safeguarding Policy and Procedures document reflects this commitment and aims to ensure that all concerns about the care and protection of children/young people and vulnerable adults are effectively managed
- **Tracy Keenan** is responsible for developing and reviewing the organisation's Safeguarding Policy statement and other care and protection policies and guidelines.

However, all workers (paid or unpaid) for BSCC are required to implement the safeguarding procedures.

- Section 5 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 states that “it shall be the responsibility of a person who is 16 or over and who has care and control of a child under 16, to do what is reasonable to safeguard the child’s health, development and welfare”. This places on BSCC a Duty of Care for the children/ young people and vulnerable adults we work with. BSCC also recognises that all children/young people have the right to freedom from abuse as outlined in the UN Convention of Rights of the Child. BSCC will constantly strive to provide a safe environment, free from any forms of abuse, for all the young people and vulnerable adults in its care. BSCC’s understanding of abuse can be found in Appendix 2.
- BSCC has a commitment to the rights of children and vulnerable adults, notably their right to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation and to be involved in any decisions which directly affect them.

Section 2 – Recruitment

BSCC recognises that appropriate recruitment and selection procedures are a vital part of developing and maintaining a safe environment for children/young people and vulnerable adults. In order to protect the children/ vulnerable adults in its care, BSCC follows the guidelines outlined in the Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment (2023) guidance, released by the Care Inspectorate. This guidance outlines the safe protocols for the recruitment of staff - from screening to seeking references from a previous employer. BSCC staff will ensure that the protocols laid out in this guidance are carried out.

The following procedures are in place to ensure that only suitable applicants are accepted as volunteers or staff of BSCC:

- All applicants (staff and volunteers) will be asked to complete an application form or provide a full CV accounting for any gaps in employment or education
- All successful applicants (paid and unpaid positions) will be asked to provide suitable references
- All suitable applicants (paid and unpaid positions) will be asked to attend an interview
- All successful applicants appointed into ‘regulated work’ positions (as defined in Schedule 2 of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Act 2007) will be required to be Protecting Vulnerable (PVG) Scheme members. Existing PVG Scheme members will be required to show their current PVG Scheme Record and agree to a PVG Scheme Record Update being carried out
- Any applicant found to be fully listed on the children’s list will not be appointed to work (paid or unpaid) in a regulated work position.

Section 3 - Training

Each adult will receive an induction upon the acceptance of their role at BSCC. BSCC recognises the importance that staff are trained right from induction to understand the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse (including the signs known as softer signs of abuse), understand what is meant by safeguarding, and are aware of the different ways in which children and vulnerable adults can be facing abuse either in or outwith the setting.

All newly appointed staff and volunteers at BSCC will receive training, support, information and guidance to ensure they understand their role and responsibilities with regard to child protection and safeguarding. This will include:

- Details of the structure of the organisation will be provided, including the details of overall responsibility for safeguarding within the organisation
- Details of the organisation's aims and objectives will be provided
- An assessment of staff (paid and unpaid) training and development requirements will be completed
- The roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers within the organisation will be clarified
- Clear details of the expectations, roles and responsibilities of all newly appointed staff and volunteers will be provided
- All staff and volunteers must agree and sign up to the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Training, information and a copy of the organisation's Code of Conduct will be provided
- The contact details and roles and responsibilities of the organisation's Safeguarding Officer will be provided.

In addition to annual child protection and safeguarding training, all staff will be involved in the process of continuous reflection and evaluation of practice and understanding of safeguarding, through team meetings. Safeguarding is a standing topic for all staff meetings (local and senior team) where reflection upon practice, scenarios and understanding of detecting, recording and reporting are regularly reviewed.

BSCC staff must ensure that recording devices are only used in line with the BSCC Photography and Image Sharing Policy. At no point will footage be taken of a child or vulnerable adult that puts them at risk of harm or exploitation.

Section 4 - Responding to suspicion or allegation of abuse

Members of staff (paid and unpaid) have a duty to report any suspicions, allegations or disclosures to the **Designated Safeguarding Officer** or the Chair of BSCC. However, the first concern must be the reassurance of the child/ young person or vulnerable adult and their protection from any potential risk. During the reporting process the young person/vulnerable adult should be protected from further contact with the individual involved in the allegation.

As a worker or volunteer your role in child / vulnerable adult protection is not to investigate or decide if abuse has taken place. Your role is to observe, record and report. The following steps should be followed in response to suspicion or allegation of abuse:

Are you concerned about the safety of a child/young person or vulnerable adult?

For example if:

- A child/young person or vulnerable adult has alleged that they are being abused
- You see or suspect abuse
- The organisation has received a third party report that a child/young person or vulnerable adult is being abused/neglected
- There are signs and indicators which could point to abuse/neglect



ACT IMMEDIATELY

Discuss your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer **Tracy Keenan**, or the Chair of BSCC, as soon as possible. If the allegation is about the Safeguarding Officer **Tracy Keenan** contact the Chair of BSCC. These steps should be taken as soon as possible.

In following the procedures below please bear in mind:

DO NOT INVESTIGATE - Staff and volunteers should not attempt to investigate the situation any further or interview the child/ young person or vulnerable adult regarding the situation.

CONFIDENTIALITY - Details of suspicion, allegations or disclosures should only be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Officer Tracy Keenan, or the Chair of BSCC. If responding to an allegation from a young person/vulnerable adult you must not promise to keep the information they disclose confidential.



RECORD INFORMATION

Detailed written records should be made of all events and what the young person/ vulnerable adult or other individuals have said (where this applies). A form is supplied in **Appendix 1** to help structure this. It can also be used to inform Social Work/Police of the events that have occurred. Above and beyond the facts, any opinions or personal interpretations of the facts presented can be recorded but it should be clear they are opinions, rather than facts. Records should be signed and stored in a secure place.



SEEK ADVICE and REFER TO APPROPRIATE AGENCY

Designated Safeguarding Officer **Tracy Keenan**, or Chair of BSCC, should contact the Social Work Department and/or the Police and ask to speak to the Duty Officer about a safeguarding issue. If the report is received during an evening then the Social Work department Emergency Duty team and/or the Police should be contacted. Any further action should only be taken in line with the advice given by the Social Work Department. This includes whether the parent or carer of the young person should be informed of the child protection concerns.

Additional contact details: If you are worried that a child/vulnerable adult is at **immediate risk of harm**, phone the Police on 999 without delay. If you are worried that a child **may be at risk of harm**, please visit <http://hcpc.scot/professionals> (external link) for local contact numbers

If you are worried that a child may be at risk of harm and it is outwith office hours, phone 08457 697284

For further information about child protection visit www.hcpc.scot (external link)

Where an allegation is made against a BSCC worker (paid or unpaid), the above process still applies. We will:

- In all cases, suspend the worker pending investigation by the relevant authorities (police and social services)
- Inform BSCC worker with limited explanation and timeframe for investigation where possible
- For Care Inspectorate registered activity e.g. Corry Capers, advise Care Inspectorate of allegations and complete necessary paperwork on Care Inspectorate online portal
- In all cases, make a referral (send a written report) to Disclosure Scotland if an individual harms a child/vulnerable adult or puts a child/vulnerable adult at risk of harm and as a result of this, we take the decision to remove them (or would have removed them had they not left of their own accord, come to the end of a contract, retire or have been made redundant). The form for referral to Disclosure Scotland is available on the Scottish Government website www.scotland.gov.uk

Section 5 – Responding when a child/young person or vulnerable adult discloses abuse

It is likely that a child/young person or vulnerable adult who has been abused will have given a lot of thought as to whether they should disclose the abuse. It is highly likely that they will be nervous and afraid that they might be rejected, blamed or not believed. It is important that staff and volunteers follow the steps outlined below:

Stay calm

Remain calm and natural. You have been approached because you are trusted, not because you are an expert counsellor. Do not promise to keep the information secret; you may have to inform an appropriate person. You must take any disclosure seriously and reassure the young person or vulnerable adult that you believe them.

Listen and take the allegation seriously

Listen to what the child/young person or vulnerable adult is saying. Give them the time and opportunity to tell you as much as they are able and willing to. Do not pressurise them, and allow them to disclose information at their own pace. You should not investigate, ask leading questions or ask specific or explicit questions. You should only clarify what they are willing to tell you in their own words. Try to do this in an appropriate place, such as a room where other people can see in through an open door or window. Whilst it's important to respect the young person or vulnerable adult's privacy it should not be at the expense of other safeguarding measures.

Reassure

Reassure them that you believe what they are saying and that you know it is not their fault. You should also give them some indication of what you will do next with the information that they have given you.

Confidentiality

Reiterate that you cannot promise to keep the information secret. You must take any disclosure seriously. Details of the disclosure should only be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, **Tracy Keenan**, or the Chair of BSCC, who should refer the case to the appropriate authorities.

Wherever possible you should try not to discuss any concerns that you have about a child/young person or vulnerable adult in a way that may lead others to suspect that they are being abused.

Record

If you are able to, make brief notes during the initial disclosure, explaining to the young person why you are doing it. If it's not possible to do so at the time, record the details as soon as possible after the disclosure with as many facts as possible (dates, times, actual words used).

Look after yourself

Being trusted with a disclosure of abuse directly from a young person can be emotionally draining, worrying and very stressful. Whilst it's essential that confidentiality is maintained at all times, it's important that you consider your own emotional feelings and discuss any anxieties you have with the Safeguarding Officer, Tracy Keenan, or the Chair of BSCC.

Section 6 – Protection of Workers who report care and protection concerns

Deciding to report a colleague or volunteer you suspect of abusing or otherwise harming a child or vulnerable adult can be stressful and difficult and you may be worried about the person concerned taking action against you. The law does give you protection if you raise concerns or report a colleague as long as the report was not malicious or vexatious.

Section 7 – Data Protection and management of confidential information

BSCC is committed to the safe and secure management of confidential information. All personnel information, including volunteer information, can only be accessed by those that require it to carry out their role. Only relevant information is kept and this is regularly reviewed and outdated information destroyed appropriately.

BSCC is also committed to the rights of children/young people and vulnerable adults to confidentiality, and this will be respected by all workers. However, where a worker feels that the information disclosed by a child or young people should be referred to their line manager for investigation by an appropriate agency, the young person should be told that confidentiality cannot be kept.

Section 8 – Review of Child Protection & Safeguarding policy and procedures

This Policy and Procedures document will be reviewed annually by Designated Safeguarding Officer **Tracy Keenan**, or the Chair of BSCC, and all staff and volunteers will be notified of any changes.