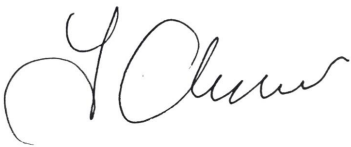




# Safeguarding Policy for Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

<b>Approved by</b>	 Janine Chandler
<b>Date approved</b>	21/06/2023
<b>Date for review</b>	21/06/2024

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# 1. Our Policy

## 1.1 Policy Statement

MyBigCareer believes that it is unacceptable for anyone to experience abuse of any kind. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and we are committed to the safe working practices outlined in this policy to achieve this.

Our Safeguarding Policy is designed to protect not only our beneficiaries but also our volunteers, staff, trustees and other stakeholders. Whilst the majority of the charity's work takes place with children and young people under the age of 18, from time to time, staff will support young people over the age of 18 who may also be vulnerable adults. This policy therefore includes references to vulnerable adults as well as children and young people.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect the children, young people and vulnerable adults who engage with MyBigCareer services.
- To provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the principles and practices which guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.
- To ensure that all individuals who come into contact with the charity (staff, volunteers, trustees, corporate partners and school contacts etc.), are treated fairly and in accordance with the law.

## 1.2 Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all staff including: senior managers, trustees, paid staff, sessional and temporary staff, students and volunteers working on behalf of MyBigCareer.

## 1.3 Legal and Guidance Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults in England, namely:

- Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment)
- United Convention of The Rights of the Child 1991
- Human Rights Act 1998
- European Convention of Human Rights 1953
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022
- NSPCC Safer Recruitment Guidance

Please note this list is not exhaustive and does not preclude other legislation and frameworks having relevance to our practices.

## 1.4 Organisational Values

Our safeguarding policy and decision making, like all of our policies, is also informed by our organisational values;

Compassion first  
Dream big  
Empower others  
Act with purpose

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 2004 and this is true for all children regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- Some children and young people are additionally vulnerable due to previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.
- Vulnerable adults may also require safeguarding.

We seek to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Valuing, listening to, and respecting them.
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a trustee responsible for safeguarding
- Ensuring that those we employ and who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults and/or their data, unsupervised are DBS checked
- Adopting child-centred safeguarding policies, procedures and practices and ensuring they are known and followed throughout the organisation.
- Providing effective management of cases through supervision, support, training and recording and monitoring procedures.
- Following safer recruitment guidelines and our own Safer Recruitment policy to ensure recruitment is safe and all necessary DBS checks are made.
- Designating a DBS Manager for the organisation
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely
- Sharing our safeguarding practices and procedures with schools, staff and volunteers (including trustees) and ensuring they know how to raise a concern.
- Escalating and sharing concerns and relevant information about children, young people and vulnerable adults to agencies that need to know. Children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families may be included in this process.
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately and involving other agencies when required
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints measures in place.
- Providing training for staff, trustees and volunteers to ensure they are promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people in their day-to-day work.

## **2. Managing Concerns and Disclosures**

All concerns and allegations will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. MyBigCareer recognises that whilst some incidents and allegations will require the support and / or intervention of external agencies, others may be supported through existing internal support mechanisms.

### **2.1 Procedure when there is a safeguarding concern**

Where there is a suspected concern or a direct disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, MyBigCareer staff and volunteers should follow the below steps:

- If someone is at immediate risk of significant harm the emergency services should be contacted.
- If there has been a disclosure, ensure the child or young person is aware that we may not be able to keep the information confidential.
- Inform the DSL or school lead as soon as practically possible.
- The DSL, along with the school staff, will assess the current safety and next steps which may include making a referral to the Local Authority, contacting parents/carers and/or other services.
- If a referral is made to Social Care, this should be done using the relevant Local Authority guidance (either by phone or in writing). If someone is at an immediate risk of significant harm the matter should be immediately referred to the Police or Social Care via phone or emergency line. Referrals should always be followed up in a timely manner, advised by the DSL.
- Regardless of whether a referral is made, all observations, relevant information and actions taken should be recorded as soon as possible
- If necessary the DSL should contact the charity commission to ensure compliance and transparency

### **2.2 Contextual Safeguarding**

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, children and young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families.

Extra-familial harm takes a variety of different forms and children and young people can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

If staff and volunteers are made aware of possible abuse or significant harm at school, online or in the community they must take steps to ensure the student is protected from harm. They should follow the same procedure as they would in section 2.1.

## **2.3 The Child's Wishes**

Where there is a safeguarding concern, MyBigCareer staff and volunteers should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. However, whilst a child's approval is an important consideration, it is entirely dependant on the context and seriousness of the concern.

# **3. Supporting Staff and Volunteers**

## **3.1 Recruitment and Onboarding**

MyBigCareer operates Safer Recruitment procedures in accordance with guidance and the charity's Safer Recruitment Policy. All roles are advertised with the clear requirement that staff and volunteers of the charity who are eligible for an enhanced DBS including verifying the applicants' identity.

The application process and/or interviews for staff and long-term volunteers include safeguarding and safer recruitment questions. These questions gauge the candidate's motivation and attitudes to working with children, young people and vulnerable adults and include questioning of any CV gaps.

On conditional offer, written references for staff and long-term volunteers are checked. For staff, any gaps / inconsistencies in employment are investigated and staff applicants' identity and qualifications are verified.

## **3.2 DBS Disclosure Procedures**

All paid staff and trustees and volunteers that have regulated contact with MyBigCareer's young people must have a satisfactory enhanced DBS check. The charity will ensure that all paid staff are registered on the online update service. No unsupervised contact with young people or access to information regarding service users will be authorised until the DBS check has been returned and approved. During this period all staff and volunteers will be supervised by an MyBigCareer staff member who has undergone a satisfactory enhanced DBS check.

In advance of DBS clearance being received all staff and volunteers must complete a Disclosure Declaration Form. This form will be held securely by MyBigCareer. Any foreseen disclosure should be raised to the DBS Manager at this stage.

DBS checks must be renewed at least every 3 years.

In the event a DBS application returns an adverse disclosure, further consideration will need to be given to the applicant. The DBS Manager and DSL will review and assess if this person is suitable to work with MyBigCareer's young people. If any external agencies need to be contacted, permission will be sought from the individual. If they are unable to reach an outcome or need further input, a Risk Assessment Panel will gather to review the information. The panel will include: the DBS Manager, DSL and a Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding .

The Risk Assessment Panel will make a decision on whether to employ the applicant as a paid member of staff or permit them to volunteer. In making this decision the panel may take the following into account:

- The nature and seriousness of the offence(s)
- The age at which the offence(s) was committed
- The time elapsed since the offence(s) was committed
- Any further offence(s)
- Circumstances at the time of the offence(s)
- The potential risk to children/young people/vulnerable adults
- Legal advice
- Whether the applicant declared any offences on the Disclosure Declaration Form (see Appendix E), job application form and/or at interview

The Risk Assessment Panel will decide whether any further action is required, for example contacting the police or safeguarding authorities. The Risk Assessment will be kept securely on file.

### **3.3 Training**

All Trustees, staff and volunteers undergo safeguarding training during their training and induction period that is applicable to their role.

If a former staff member or volunteer returns to work or volunteer with the organisation, despite any former relationship, they will need to complete a new enhanced DBS check.

### **3.4 Probation**

Staff cannot pass their probation unless they have completed their Safeguarding Compliance Training or without all relevant safer recruitment checks being signed off.

### **3.5 Staff Welfare**

We recognise that working with children, young people and vulnerable adults who are victims of abuse can be challenging and impact staff and volunteer wellbeing.

MyBigCareer offers the following support mechanisms:

- Line manager support
- Promotion of helplines such as NSPCC, Women's Aid

## **4. Allegations against staff and volunteers**

### **4.1 Overview and scope**

Allegations against staff and volunteers can arise and MyBigCareer is committed to having systems in place to deal with them fairly and consistently. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 states that the allegation process should be followed where it is alleged that a staff member or volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or

- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Allegations can be made by anyone including colleagues, volunteers, parents/guardians, children/young people and community/external staff. All should feel safe to express them without fear of victimisation.

## **4.2 Low level concerns**

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a feeling of unease or sensing that ‘something doesn’t feel right’. An adult working in or on behalf of the organisation may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children or young people;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children or young people on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child or young person on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door;
- humiliating children or young people

It is crucial that any such concerns are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately – see section 4.4 for reporting.

## **4.3 Allegations**

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 states that allegations meeting the harms threshold might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children or young people. They may have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or young person, or may have harmed a child or young person;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or young person;
- behaved towards a child or young person in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children or young people; or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children or young people.

Allegations can be made by anyone including colleagues, volunteers, parents/guardians, children/young people and community/external staff and all should feel safe to express them without fear of victimisation.

## **4.4 Procedure for allegations against staff and/or volunteers**

It is essential that all allegations against staff or volunteers are immediately brought to the attention of the DSL.

The following action should be taken in the event of an allegation:

- Make sure that the child, young person or vulnerable adult is safe and away from the alleged perpetrator.
- Refer the matter immediately to the DSL who will advise on next steps.
- The DSL and Trustee responsible for safeguarding or relevant delegated Trustee will discuss and consider the need for a referral to the Local Authority.
- Follow any advice given regarding contact with the parents/carers if the alleged victim is a person who has not yet reached the age of eighteen.
- MyBigCareer's disciplinary procedures may be implemented, irrespective of the action that is taken by social workers or the police.
- Consider whether the alleged perpetrator has access to children, young people or vulnerable adults elsewhere and if so who needs to be informed
- MyBigCareer will work closely with the Local Authority as well as the police in following procedures.
- MyBigCareer will follow up any external investigation with an internal review to ensure any changes needed are put in place.
- MyBigCareer will keep a record of all allegations, investigations and reviews.
- MyBigCareer may contact the charity commission to ensure compliance and transparency.

## **4.5 Whistleblowing Policy**

MyBigCareer has a clear whistleblowing procedure, found in the staff handbook and referenced in staff training, and promotes a culture that enables issues about safeguarding of all individuals to be addressed.

## **5. Internet and device safety**

MyBigCareer is committed to protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults while using its services from the risks posed by the internet, use of email, messaging, video conferencing and social networking. All users are advised about the risks and measures that are in place to promote safe access to the internet.

MyBigCareer is aware of the increased risk to children and young people when using online platforms as seen in the 'How safe are our children online? 2019; An overview of data on child abuse online' review. We will keep children and young people safe by:

- Providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online
- Supporting children and young people using our service to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe
- Developing clear and robust procedures to enable us to respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour
- Reviewing and updating the security of our information systems and online platforms regularly
- Ensuring that images of children, young people and families are used only after permission has been obtained
- Providing supervision, support and training for staff and volunteers about online safety
- Risk assessing any online platforms or new technologies before they are used within the organisation

## **6. Information Sharing and Confidentiality**

MyBigCareer understands that information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. It is a key factor identified in many serious case reviews (SCRs), where poor information sharing has resulted in missed opportunities to take action that keeps children and young people safe and we are therefore committed to multi-agency working.

All information regarding safeguarding incidents and concerns is stored securely on MyBigCareer's shared drive and not on individual devices. Safeguarding concerns and disclosures will only be shared in circumstances that will further protect the child or young person from harm. Sensitive information should not be shared with colleagues and/or other agencies unless instructed by the DSL. When information is being shared, it is done so via password protected databases or documents where the password is shared via a different format.

## **7. Parental/Guardian involvement**

MyBigCareer recognises the role of parents and carers when safeguarding children and young people and seeks to include them in conversations if it does not pose further risk to the child or young person. Whenever it is safe and possible, parental consent is sought to make referrals to Local Authorities or external agencies.

Permission is always obtained in advance (by MBC or school partner) for all onsite and offsite activities from the person with parental responsibility.

MyBigCareer promotes external opportunities that we feel will benefit our children and young people, including online webinars and work placements. When staff find external opportunities they must ensure the following:

- The service upholds good safeguarding standards
- The service is appropriate for the age group
- The child/young person and parent/guardian are aware that this is an external opportunity and that MyBigCareer will not be present

MyBigCareer supports students in attaining work experience placements.

Parent/guardians are informed of the steps that MyBigCareer takes to safeguard young people on placement. Organisations are also made aware of MyBigCareer's Safeguarding Policy and all employees are expected to adhere to this policy whilst hosting work experience students.

## **8. Risk Assessments**

MyBigCareer's risk assessments cover all staff and volunteers (including trustees) who work and interact with children, young people and vulnerable adults as part of the service. In preparing risk assessments for off-site visits, staff should ensure that other agencies, where appropriate, have a risk assessment in place.

MyBigCareer staff and volunteers are expected to risk assess dynamically during all activities and delivery and highlight hazards and mitigations. These should be added to risk assessments when necessary.

Individual risk assessments will be completed for a child or young person with extenuating circumstances to ensure they can participate in on and off site activities safely. Cases where an individual risk assessment is needed could include, but are not limited to, young people showing violent or risky behaviours, self harm or external dangers such as prohibited parental contact. Individual risk assessments should be written and shared with the DSL and discussed with the parent/carers and child/young person when it does not cause further risk to do so.

## **9. Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm**

Whilst all children and young people should be protected, it is important that we recognise some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 states the following as children and young people potentially at greater risk of harm:

- Children/young people who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)
- Children/young people requiring mental health support – if staff have a mental health concern about a child/young person that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy.
- Children/young people missing from education or those opting for Elective Home Education (EHE) – EHE can be a positive experience for a child and is not always a safeguarding concern but it does mean that children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported.
- Looked after children, previously looked after children, care leavers and care experienced young people
- Children/young people with special educational needs and disabilities or physical health issues – additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children
- Children/young people who are lesbian, gay, bi, trans or queer (LGBTQ+) – the fact that a child or young person may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children/young people who are LGBTQ+ can be targeted by other children/young people. In some cases, a child/young person who is perceived by other children/young people to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children/young people who identify as LGBTQ+.

MyBigCareer recognises that these children and young people may be at a higher risk of experiencing safeguarding concerns and abuse. It is imperative that staff consider that behaviours displayed may be a sign or indicator of possible abuse or a safeguarding concern.

## **10. Privacy and Data Storage**

All data and information relating to safeguarding concerns and cases will be stored, secured and maintained in line with our Privacy Policy which is available to read on our website.

# **11. Glossary of safeguarding terminology**

## **11.1 Safeguarding:**

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and young people and protect them from harm and is defined in “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018” as:

- protecting children and young people from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children’s/young people’s mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children and young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children/young people identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child/young person.

## **11.2 Children/young people:**

A child is defined as anyone who has not reached the age of 18. This is enshrined in UK law and the UN Convention of Human Rights.

## **11.3 A vulnerable adult**

An adult at risk of abuse or neglect is defined as someone who has needs for care and support, who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of their age or care needs is unable to protect themselves.

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is defined in the care and support statutory guidance issued under the Care Act 2014 as:

- protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect;
- people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect;
- people and organisations making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action;
- recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances and therefore potential risks to their safety or well-being.

## **11.4 Children’s Social Care:**

The work of local authorities exercising their social services functions with regard to children. Arrangements for children’s social care will differ within each local authority and each Centre

Leader should ensure that they are familiar with the systems operated by their Local Authority. In Scotland, Local Authority social work departments have responsibility for social service functions with regard to children.

## **12. Internal Roles and Responsibilities**

### **12.1 The Trustees**

are responsible for ensuring that an appropriate Safeguarding Policy is in place and for nominating a 'Safeguarding Trustee'.

### **12.2 The Safeguarding Trustee**

has oversight of MyBigCareer's Safeguarding policy and procedures, and responsibility for promoting the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults within the charity.

### **12.3 The Chief Executive**

is responsible for ensuring that the Safeguarding policy is implemented within MyBigCareer as a whole and ensuring that appropriate staff and volunteer training is provided where necessary.

### **12.4 The Chief Executive is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).**

They are responsible for internal staff training and for ensuring that the charity is kept abreast of current legislation and best practice. They are also responsible for coordinating, processing and keeping records of all incidents and all referrals to external agencies.

### **12.5 The DBS Manager**

is responsible for ensuring that all employed staff and long-term volunteers have a current DBS clearance. All staff and volunteers are responsible for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. They should be diligent in immediately sharing suspicions or disclosures with the DBS Manager or DSL.

## **13. External Roles and Responsibilities**

### **13.1 The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

in England and Wales is responsible for managing all allegations made against staff and volunteers who work with children and young people in their specific locality. The LADO may also be contacted by the charity as a source of advice. In Scotland, contact with the Local Authority social work department should be made.

### **13.2 Local Authority Social Care.**

Each Local Authority will have a team overseeing safeguarding within its area. Any concerns that meet the threshold for reporting to the Local Authority must be referred to the authority that the

child or young person resides in. If a member of staff is unsure if the Local Authority need to be informed, they can consult with the DSL for advice

### **13.3 Police.**

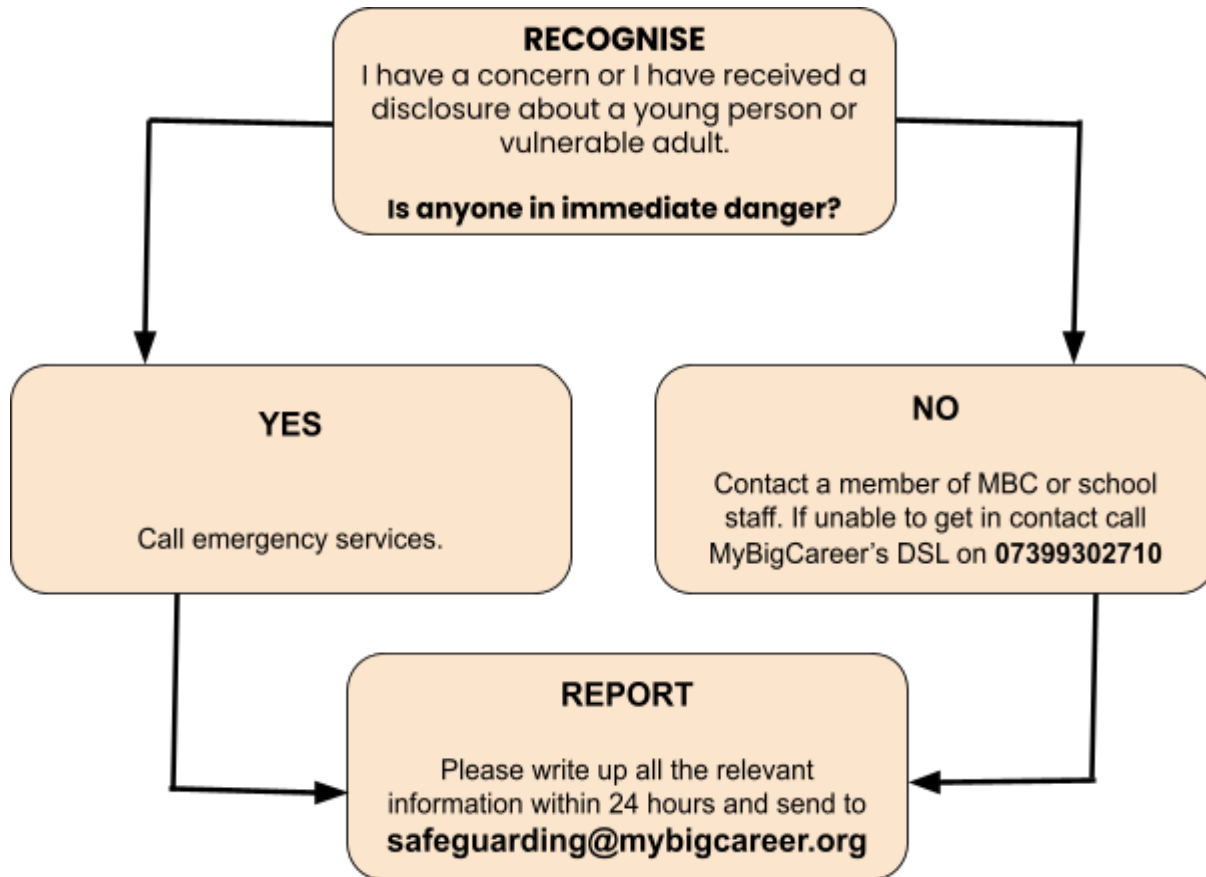
Can be contacted on 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency) if there is a direct disclosure of serious or immediate harm. If a member of staff is unsure if the police need to be called, they can consult with the DSL for advice.

### **13.4 Other Agencies.**

Other agencies who may be involved with the care of children, young people and adults include: schools, housing organisations, social services, health services and other third sector agencies. Liaison with these agencies may be necessary in particular cases.

# 14. Appendices

## Appendix A: Safeguarding Process Map



## Appendix B: Safeguarding Team Contacts



Designated Safeguarding Lead - Laura Littlehailes (Chief Executive)  
laura@mybigcareer.org  
07399302710



Safeguarding Trustee - Hayley Equi  
hayley@mybigcareer.org



DBS Manager - Sophia Westbury (Volunteer Manager)  
sophia@mybigcareer.org  
07399302707

## **Appendix C: KCSIE Indicators of abuse and neglect**

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child or young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child/young person by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children/young people 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/young people may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Please see [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022](#) paragraph 26–30 for more information on the indicators of abuse and neglect.

## **Appendix D: Legislative Framework**

The legislative bases for protecting Children and Young People are the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004. The Children Act 1989 is the legislative basis both for protecting Children and Young People from significant harm and promoting the provision of services for Children and Young People in need. The Children Act 2004 sets out the vision for Children and Young People in terms of five key outcomes:

- staying safe
- being healthy
- enjoying and achieving
- making a positive contribution
- achieving economic well-being.

The 'staying safe' outcome is underpinned by a statutory duty of all agencies working with Children and Young People to promote safeguarding in the way it carries out its function.

Section 11 of The Children Act 2004 says that every organisation working with children, young people and parents that receives grant funding must show that they are run safely.

Children and Young People have a legal right to be protected from harm under the Children Act 1989 and also the European Convention of Human Rights 1953.

Sections 36 to 41 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 sets out the duty on local authorities, schools and organisations to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Channel programme. The DSL should be contacted in the event that any staff member has a concern about a child or young person being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

## Appendix E: Staff and Volunteer Disclosure Declaration Form

This form should be completed and signed by every employee or volunteer at the time of completing a DBS application. This form will be held on record until your DBS certificate has been returned, and it will only be retained after this point if required to support the recruitment decision, or for safeguarding purposes. Once you have received the DBS certificate you need to contact MyBigCareer at the earliest possible opportunity. Please note that failure to bring in your DBS disclosure may result in you being unable to continue with your volunteering/work commitments. All questions must be answered.

Name of DBS Applicant	
Applicant's role at MyBigCareer	
Staff member processing this form	

Have you been subject to any disciplinary procedures relating to the safety and welfare of children or young people including any instance where the disciplinary sanction has expired or where the allegation was unfounded and/or no disciplinary sanctions were imposed? If so please give details.	Yes	No
Have any official allegations or concerns ever been expressed about your suitability to work with children and young people? If so please give details, including whether the allegation or concern was investigated, the outcome and how the matter was resolved.	Yes	No
Do you have any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings which would not be filtered in line with current guidance? If you answered Yes, please provide further details:	Yes	No
Have you read MyBigCareer's Safeguarding Policy?	Yes	No

Signed:

Date: