

Bliss Safeguarding Policy

Policy Purpose and Aim

Bliss' vision is that every baby born premature or sick in the UK has the best chance of survival and quality of life. We achieve this by supporting families to be involved in care, supporting healthcare professionals, influencing policy and practice, and enabling life-changing research.

As a result of this work Bliss engages directly and indirectly with adults who may be at risk of harm, and with children. This could be through interactions with beneficiaries (premature and sick babies and children who were born premature or sick), service users such as parents and families, with healthcare professionals, Bliss staff, trustees and others.

Bliss' values of being ambitious, supportive and trusted underpin our responsibility to make sure our interactions are managed thoughtfully, with due attention and understanding of risk of harm and safeguarding best practice. This policy aims to:

- Set out Bliss' responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm, and detail who holds those responsibilities
- Provide workable definitions of safeguarding, risk of harm, abuse and neglect
- Summarise the principles expected to be followed by Bliss representatives identifying and managing concerns and issues
- Summarise Bliss' approach to risk assessment, governance, continuous learning and reflective practice
- Identify other Bliss policies and procedures which are relevant to Safeguarding adults at risk of harm and children.

Policy scope

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and this policy therefore applies to anyone who is representing Bliss. Bliss representatives include, but are not limited to:

- Bliss members of staff, employed or sessional
- Freelancers and contractors working on behalf of Bliss
- Bliss Volunteers, including Bliss Champions, Bliss Volunteer Baby Charter Assessors, fundraising support volunteers and other volunteer ambassadors.
- Bliss Trustees

The policy covers interactions between Bliss representatives and others, including but not limited to:

- Beneficiaries (babies or children born premature or sick)
- Service users (families and carers of babies or children born premature or sick, and others)
- Healthcare professionals caring for babies or children born premature or sick
- Bliss members of staff, employed or sessional
- Freelancers and contractors working on behalf of Bliss
- Bliss Volunteers
- Bliss Trustees

Associated policies and procedures:

This policy should be read alongside our other policies and guidance relating to:

- Data protection and confidentiality
- Policies relating to disclosure of criminal records for staff, volunteers and trustees
- Policies relating to Health and safety
- Policies relating to staff management, especially wellbeing
- Bliss' Equal opportunities and diversity policy
- Policies, guidance, and procedures relating to volunteering
- Policies relating to the involvement of service users
- Bliss' Complaints policy
- Bliss' Ethical Policy
- The Bliss Staff Handbook
- Bliss' Whistleblowing policy

Roles and Responsibilities

Bliss Trustees

Trustees must take reasonable steps to protect from harm people who come into contact with Bliss. Examples of these people are listed above.

The Charity Commission will hold trustees to account if things go wrong and will check that trustees followed appropriate guidance and the law. Trustees are expected to take responsibility for putting things right. Trustees should promote an open and positive culture and ensure all involved feel able to report concerns, confident that they will be heard and responded to.

Trustees should make sure that Bliss:

- has appropriate policies and procedures in place, which are followed by all Bliss representatives
- checks that people are suitable to act in their roles
- knows how to spot and handle concerns in a full and open manner
- has a clear system of referring or reporting to relevant agencies as soon as concerns are suspected or identified
- sets out risks and how they will be managed in a risk register which is regularly reviewed
- follows statutory guidance, good practice guidance and legislation relevant to their charity.
- is quick to respond to concerns and carry out appropriate investigations
- does not ignore harm or downplay failures
- has a balanced trustee board and does not let one trustee dominate its work – trustees should work together
- makes sure protecting people from harm is central to its culture
- has enough resources, including trained staff/volunteers/trustees for safeguarding and protecting people

- conducts periodic reviews of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice. This policy should be reviewed annually, or when any major incident occurs, or potential changes are identified.

All Trustees should complete safeguarding training every three years.

The designated safeguarding lead on the Trustee Board is Charlotte Witteridge

Bliss' Responsibilities

The charity, led by the Senior Management Team, must ensure that Bliss is acting in accordance with best practice and appropriate guidance. This includes making sure that:

- This policy is reviewed annually, or when any major incident occurs, or potential changes are identified.
- All Bliss employees and volunteers complete safeguarding training as part of an induction into their role, and on an annual basis thereafter.
- Additional safeguarding training and regular supervision is provided to Bliss representatives who have regular direct or indirect contact with children or with adults at risk of harm
- All Bliss representatives are aware of the Bliss Safeguarding Policy
- Procedures relating to safeguarding are followed appropriately.
- The Safeguarding lead or, in their absence a member of the Senior Management Team acting as deputy, can be contacted during business hours, to enable the reporting and management of safeguarding concerns.
- The Safeguarding lead is supported in the completion of their responsibilities

Responsibilities of Safeguarding lead

This person is responsible for the day-to-day oversight and implementation of the policy and procedures, supporting Bliss representatives, and ensuring continuous learning. Responsibilities include:

- To ensure this policy is reviewed annually, or when any major incident occurs, or potential changes are identified.
- To monitor the completion of safeguarding training by Bliss trustees, staff and volunteers, and to regularly check the appropriateness of the training.
- To provide the first point of contact for Bliss representatives to report safeguarding incidents or concerns
- To ensure there is an appropriate point of contact for Bliss representatives should they not be available (usually members of the SMT acting as Deputy Safeguarding lead)
- To oversee the completion of the Bliss Safeguarding Procedures, supporting Bliss representatives as appropriate
- To assess the Safeguarding risk of Bliss activities, and ensure relevant members of staff and trustees are aware of any activities with elevated risks.
- To oversee the keeping of appropriate records of safeguarding incidents and concerns
- To oversee the sharing of details of safeguarding incidents to ensure learning and best practice (taking care to appropriately manage anonymity).

- To be available out of core working hours at times when activities are identified as elevated risk
- To take steps to ensure concerns and incidents are reviewed, and learning is taken forward appropriately.
- To report to the Trustee Board as appropriate, at least annually, to cover staff and volunteer training, recruitment checks, incidents, learning and recommendations.

The Safeguarding Lead is the Director of Services, Peter Bradley.

Responsibilities of members of the Senior Management Team

- To act as deputy to the safeguarding lead, deputising for all responsibilities of the safeguarding lead should they not be available.
- To provide support to the Safeguarding Lead in the completion of their duties in this document
- To provide consent to the reporting of a safeguarding incident or concern, if necessary
- To provide consent to the breaching of confidentiality, if necessary.

Responsibilities of Bliss representatives

Bliss representatives are responsible for understanding and adhering to Bliss safeguarding policies and procedures, including:

- To be familiar with the Bliss Safeguarding Policy
- To follow procedures within this policy if any safeguarding concerns arise.
- To complete the Safeguarding training annually when prompted by Bliss (employees and volunteers)
- To complete additional safeguarding training as identified by Bliss
- To report any concerns they identify with the training, support, procedures or policy to the safeguarding lead, or to a member of SMT if the concern relates to the Safeguarding lead.
- To follow procedures within this policy if any safeguarding concerns arise, which are summarised in the section below
- To identify planned activities which may require specific safeguarding risk to be assessed in advance

Managing safeguarding concerns and incidents

At any time where they have come into any form of contact with an adult or child who they think could be at risk of harm, Bliss' representative should:

- Make efforts to gather information and make notes at the time
- Without delay report their concerns to their line manager, or directly to the safeguarding lead (or their deputy),

The Safeguarding Lead will support them to take appropriate actions, following additional guidance which can be found in resources made available to all staff, volunteers and other Bliss representatives.

These actions may include asking further questions to gather further information and can also include the reporting of concerns to appropriate authorities, which is usually the adult or child safeguarding team at the local authority.

It is good practice in many instances to continue to follow-up on any referrals.

A record of concerns and incidents will be kept, stored in a location which is only accessible to the safeguarding lead and their deputies. Details of where and how information is stored can be found in guidance documents.

Definitions

What is safeguarding?

Adult safeguarding is working with adults at risk of harm to keep them safe from abuse or neglect. Safeguarding of children is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children and adults at risk of harm from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to the health or development of children, young people and adults at risk of harm
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children, young people and adults at risk of harm to have the best outcomes.

Who is a child or young person?

In England a Child is legally defined as anyone who is yet to reach their 18th birthday. This is the definition used in this policy and in Bliss procedures and guidance.

The term 'young person' or 'young people' may also be used to denote older children who are able to make decisions for themselves, but who remain under 18. Bliss' beneficiaries are babies born sick or premature, who are children. Some of Bliss service users will also be children, eg. Parents under the age of 18, who can also be referred to as young people.

Who is an adult at risk of harm?

An 'adult at risk of harm' is someone aged 16 or over who:

- can't look after their own well-being, property, rights or other interests
- is at risk of harm from themselves or someone else
- is disabled, or has a mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity that means they are more vulnerable to being harmed than other adults.

Being disabled or having a condition does not automatically mean that an adult is at risk. A person can be disabled but able to look after their own well-being. Their circumstances as a

whole should be considered and all 3 elements of the definition must be met in order for them to be classed as an adult at risk.

Adults to whom this applies are often referred to as vulnerable. This policy, and Bliss guidance and procedures will use the term 'adult at risk of harm', to acknowledge that, as the Care Act 2014 describes, abuse of adults links to circumstances rather than the characteristics of the people experiencing the harm.

What is 'harm'?

The term harm covers all harmful behaviour, for example:

- physical harm
- psychological harm causing fear, alarm or distress
- behaviour which adversely affects property, rights or interests (for example, theft, fraud, embezzlement or extortion)
- self-harm
- neglect.

The NSPCC defines child abuse as any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention.

More information about definitions

Helpful information can be found at:

- [NSPCC website](#)
 - [Ann Craft Trust website](#)
 - Citizens Advice information about protecting [children](#)
 - [Social Care Institute of Excellence](#)
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- **Risk Assessment**

Bliss takes an active approach to assessing safeguarding risk, whereby the risks of standard activity and special activity are recorded, and mitigations considered.

In Bliss' organisational risk register, we have one overarching safeguarding risk described as below (likelihood / impact ratings as at May 2022):

Specific risk	Mitigation and controls	Likelihood	Impact
Safeguarding / serious safeguarding incident reported	- Undertake safeguarding review and implement plan of		

or shared publicly, in context of need to update internal governance and processes around safeguarding	recommendations - Sufficient input from safeguarding trustee and external expertise as needed		
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A more detailed risk register for this area is given below. These risks will be reviewed annually, with actions taken forward by the Safeguarding Lead

Risk	Mitigation
Bliss representatives become aware of concerns or safeguarding incidents relating to beneficiaries (babies and children). This is most likely to occur in Bliss support work or in fundraising activity, for example participants in community and events fundraising.	Appropriate safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers. Appropriate procedures in place to manage concerns and incidents Safeguarding lead and deputies aware of and acting on responsibilities Transparent culture and reflective practice instigated by safeguarding lead, SMT and Trustee Board
Bliss representatives become aware of concerns or safeguarding incidents relating to service users (including parents and families)	Appropriate safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers. Appropriate procedures in place to manage concerns and incidents Safeguarding lead and deputies aware of and acting on responsibilities Transparent culture and reflective practice instigated by safeguarding lead, SMT and Trustee Board
Bliss' information, support or other services have the potential to cause harm through inaccurate information	Bliss information development process includes service user involvement Bliss information development process includes review by appropriate experts including healthcare professionals Bliss information development process includes appropriate internal approval controls ahead of publication
Bliss' information, support or other services have the potential to cause harm through inappropriate conduct of Bliss representatives	Appropriate safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers. Bliss' interactions with service users are actively managed at team and individual level Appropriate procedures in place to manage concerns and incidents Safeguarding lead and deputies aware of and acting on responsibilities Transparent culture and reflective practice instigated by safeguarding lead, SMT and Trustee Board

Specific activities which may involve additional risks are assessed using a template, and are approved ahead of activity by the Safeguarding Lead

These risks are reviewed annually, or when any major incident occurs, or potential changes are identified, by the Safeguarding Lead and Trustee Board.

Governance, learning and reflective practice

In line with the responsibilities outlined above, the Trustees, Bliss and the Trustee Board will ensure appropriate oversight and continuous learning by taking the following actions:

- This policy will be reviewed annually or when any major incident occurs, or potential changes are identified, by the Safeguarding Lead and Trustee Board.
- Bliss' assessments of safeguarding risk will be reviewed annually, or when any major incident occurs, or potential changes are identified, by the Safeguarding Lead and Trustee Board.
- Bliss' safeguarding procedures will be reviewed annually, or when any major incident occurs, or potential changes are identified, by the Safeguarding Lead and Trustee Board.
- A safeguarding report, highlighting any significant concerns, incidents, learning or changes in practice, will be provided by the Safeguarding Lead at each meeting of the Trustee Board
- Learning from each of these reviews and reports will be shared with appropriate members of Bliss staff and/or Bliss volunteers, by the Safeguarding Lead.

Policy Owner: Peter Bradley, Director of Services

Next Review Date: June 2023