

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



MISSION STATEMENT

To develop and enhance the skills and potential of the local business community and their future workforce through structured education, training and enterprise initiatives.

The Havering Business Education Partnership Child Protection Policy is taken from the Barnet Education Business Partnership Child Protection Policy

The Barnet Education Business Partnership Child Protection Policy is endorsed by the Centre for Education and Industry (CEI), at Warwick University

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POLICY

Our Child Protection policy supports and reinforces existing legislation and government guidance (Children Act 1989 and “Working Together To Safeguard Children”) as well as UN conventions.

It sets out some key principles to help fulfil our duty towards children and young adults with whom we have contact.

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) has been established to replace the existing body to process police checks. Its primary purpose is to prevent people who may be unsuitable for work with children and young adults from gaining access to them through the workplace. It will do this through issuing “Disclosures” - documents that will give details of convictions.

For the purpose of this policy, a child is legally deemed to be any child up to and including the age of eighteen. This policy also refers to young adults beyond the age of eighteen who are deemed to be vulnerable i.e. adults who may have mental health difficulties or have learning difficulties.

For the purpose of this Policy a volunteer who would be required to complete a “Disclosure” is defined as someone who has sustained contact with a young person or vulnerable adult and who may be unsupervised when supporting an education business activity.

Representatives from local businesses and community agencies who support “one off” activities working with pairs or small groups of young people and always in the presence of other adults will also be referred to as volunteers but will not be asked to complete a “Disclosure.” All volunteers are asked to note and adhere to this Policy.

We believe that we all share some responsibility for promoting the welfare and protection of children and young adults and we have a duty to safeguard them from significant harm, as embodied in the Children Act 1989. This includes the physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect of all children and young adults with whom our organisation will have contact. We recognise that all children and young adults from all backgrounds are subject to possible abuse and neglect, by parents, carers, by a stranger, paid staff and volunteers in organisations and institutions, and other young people.

We will work within the Child Protection procedures of the London Borough of Havering and we will undertake all reasonable steps to safeguard and avert preventable harm to children and young adults. We will take seriously any allegation of abuse and neglect and make a referral to the appropriate agency. Our business partners will be required to read and familiarise themselves with our Child Protection Policy.

Benefits to Business

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It is everybody's responsibility to ensure that children and young adults are protected from harm. Business organisations have a duty and responsibility to ensure that they provide adequate safeguards for the children and young adults with whom they have contact.

The Child Protection Policy addresses ways of ensuring that business partners are able to establish safe work practices, for children and young adults and for their own employees. It is hoped that the adoption of this Policy will minimise the potential for any malicious allegations made against volunteers. It will also demonstrate to all parties involved, (children, young adults, parents and educators) that business partners are taking these responsibilities seriously and are committed to the protection of children and young adults.

Practice

Volunteers from local businesses and community agencies in collaboration with our partners in Education will:

- Ensure that activities which involve a single child or a young adult working with a business volunteer, will take place in a room which can be easily observed by others, or doors should be left open
- Be very clear about professional boundaries with children and young adults by:-
 - ❖ avoiding all occasions where a single adult is in the company of a lone child or young adult particularly where there is little or no possibility of the activity being supervised or observed.
 - ❖ not meeting with children or young adults away from the school premises without a parent or responsible adult being present.
 - ❖ keeping to a minimum physical contact, which should only take place where there is a genuine reason in relation to the activity.
 - ❖ never using verbal interactions, which are demeaning or belittling. Jokes should never be made at the expense of children or young adults. Extreme care should be taken so that what is said is not misconstrued and innuendo should be avoided.
 - ❖ not sharing personal information inappropriately
- Ensure that children and young adults are encouraged to report any concerns in relation to contact with volunteers from local businesses and community agencies to their teacher or another identified adult.

Procedure

Wherever anyone suspects child abuse, it is his or her duty to report the matter. Investigation is the responsibility and duty of the Local Authority (LB Havering) and the Police Child Protection Team.

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What should a business volunteer or a representative from a community agency do when they have suspicions about a parent or another professional, or when a child or young adult makes an allegation?

Any suspicions, allegations or disclosures made by a child or young adult to a business volunteer or a representative from a community agency about a parent or another professional should be reported to a senior member of the teaching staff (ideally the designated teacher for child protection).

If there are concerns about the conduct of a business volunteer or representative of a community agency the school/college should liaise as a matter of urgency with the Manager of the Havering BEP.

What is the best way of recording this information?

It is advisable to make a written record of any allegation/disclosure by a child or young adult as soon as possible using the child's own words. Make sure that the date, time, witnesses, and any other relevant details are included in this record.

What happens after an allegation is reported?

The designated teacher for child protection of a particular school/college or the Manager of Havering BEP will consult with the relevant LB Havering teams. This could involve a Strategy Meeting being held with a number of professionals, including the Police Child Protection Team, to consider the allegations, how any investigation should be carried out and what action should be taken.

The meeting will also consider the possibility of malicious allegations, and, if appropriate, any support which may need to be offered to the alleged perpetrator. Personnel departments of the business partners will normally have their own policies around support for their staff.

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Appendix A

The document “Working Together To Safeguard Children” (1999) identifies and defines four kinds of abuse: -

- **Physical Abuse**
This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child who they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as fictitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.
- **Emotional Abuse**
This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.
- **Sexual Abuse**
This involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect**
This is persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

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Appendix B

Disclosure is an information service provided by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) - an executive agency of the Home Office. It helps employers and volunteering organisations make informed decisions and so protect young people and vulnerable members of society. It supercedes police checking.

A Disclosure is an impartial and confidential document that details an individual's criminal record and where appropriate, details of those who are banned from working with children. In response to a request from a "volunteer" the CRB will provide an up to date Disclosure. There are three different levels of checks, Enhanced, Standard and Basic. The type of Disclosure requested will depend on the role of the volunteer. Once a volunteer has applied for a Disclosure s/he will be sent a comprehensive guide on how to complete the application form. In completing the form s/he will be requested to provide proof of identity and these documents must be original.