

Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

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About Blackpool Skills Academy

Blackpool Skills Academy (BSA) was formed in 2021 by David Hodge and Rick Jennings, two successful building contractors in the Blackpool area. They were joined by Andy Iredale, a further education expert who has led and collaborated on a range of Blackpool projects including the Opportunity Area, Careers Academy, Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (Blackpool Build Up), and the delivery of 14-16 education.

Their vision for the training business was borne from many years teaching thousands of young people in large further education colleges where it was often difficult to maintain close relationships with students and employers.

Following acquisition of the Stanley Road building in central Blackpool, this new vision is to support no more than 300 young apprentices and trainees every year to work with the family of local construction and hair and beauty firms. To help inspire a love of the industries, schools send their students aged 14-16 to spend two days a week with BSA as part of their key-stage 4 studies. This will help them practise their skills across the craft trade areas and decide where to specialise in their post 16 careers. If they decide that craft trades are not for them, we can expose them to the many professional roles within the team and wider higher education opportunities.

Rick and Dave will introduce all students to their Unique Contrax building firm and supply chain organisations to give a sense of reality. Colleagues from the hair and beauty industry will do the same. Many of the team are in their 20s and act as excellent role models. Many young colleagues left school at 16, others work with the team after lengthy degrees in architecture, quantity surveying and management.

Partnership working is at the centre of our mission, and we are already working closely with Blackpool Council, Fylde Coast Academies Trust, Bright Futures Academies Trust, Cidari Education, Lancashire LEP, the CITB, Woodspeen Training, and the national YMCA.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the legislation which Blackpool Skills Academy adheres to as part of its practice to safeguard all students.

The scope of this policy is to ensure that Blackpool Skills Academy (BSA) undertakes its responsibilities with regards to protection of children and vulnerable adults and to establish a framework to support staff in their practices

BSA recognises its statutory and moral duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of all students, irrespective of any of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. All students have the right to always remain and feel safe and as such, should not be harmed, abused, or threatened.

Statutory national and local guidance includes, but is not restricted to:

- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- DfE KCSIE Part 1 'information for all school and college staff' is mandatory reading for all staff
- DfE 'Working together to Safeguard Children'
- Dept of Health and Social Care Act (2014) Statutory Guidance
- Ofsted EIF 2019
- Home Office Counter Terrorism and Security Act (Prevent Duty 2015)
- Prevent duty guidance for FE institutions in England and Wales
- Children Act 1989 (supplemented 2014)
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (supplemented 2011)
- United Nations Rights of a Child

All staff will undertake an enhanced CRB check prior to employment which will be repeated at regular intervals. This will support BSA in making safer and more informed recruitment decisions.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure that all students are appropriately safeguarded and undertake training to support them.

Blackpool Skills Academy is committed to keeping students safe by ensuring that adults who work or volunteer in college are safe to do so. We therefore ensure that:

- Peninsula Human Resources guidance is adhered to, to ensure that there is a strong reference and commitment to safeguarding during advertisement, selection and recruitment of new staff
- There are sufficient staff/Governors who have undertaken appropriate Safer Recruitment training in the last 5 years to enable at least one person on every recruitment panel to be appropriately trained. This is a legal requirement.
- There are at least 2 people on each selection panel.
- All staff will monitor the conduct of all adults who come into contact with the students at college and report any concerns to the DSL and Centre Manager.

- Relevant, proportionate, and lawful checks are undertaken on all adults who regularly work at or visit the school
- A Single Central Record is kept of checks that are undertaken on all adults who regularly work at or visit the college
- The SCR is stored securely electronically and only assessed by designated staff and governors
- DSL/CM/Safeguarding Governor evidence regular oversight/ scrutiny of the SCR
- Evidence of staff members identity, required qualifications and the right to work in the UK are kept in individual personnel files

2. Definitions

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children and vulnerable adults wherever possible. Child and adult protection are about responding to circumstances that arise.

Definition of a child:

A child is under the age of 18

Definition of a vulnerable adult:

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years and over who may be unable to take care of themselves from harm or from being exploited.

This may include a person who:

- Has a mental illness including dementia
- Is elderly and frail
- Is a substance user
- Is homeless
- Has a learning disability

Other Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying).
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- County Lines

Children missing from education

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of BSA's safeguarding procedures for students going missing from education.

Domestic abuse

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial; and
- emotional

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Possible Indicators of Abuse or Neglect

Students may display a number of these, and it is important staff are vigilant for changes in personality/appearance/behaviour:

- Change of behaviour/attitude
- Change in attendance – missing from home
- Change in performance/concentration
- Change in appearance/personal care
- Suddenly acquiring expensive gifts or belongings
- Change in social groups/activities
- Reluctant to go home – this could be observing the student hanging around college well after classes have finished
- Change in online activities – preoccupied with certain sites, apps, or chat rooms

- Dressing/Acting differently and using different language to usual
- Physical Changes – extreme weight loss or gain
- Unexplained injuries, bruising, friction marks or scratches
- Changes in personality – more withdrawn or extrovert
- Frequently not having money to buy lunch or losing bus pass

3. Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures and to undertake annual Safeguarding training.

We expect all staff to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

Additional specific responsibilities:

The Head of Centre is responsible for:

- Ensuring the policy is in place and appropriate.
- The policy is accessible
- The policy is implemented
- The policy is monitored and reviewed
- Ensuring staff have access to appropriate training/information
- Receive any staff concerns about safeguarding and respond to all seriously, swiftly, and appropriately
- Take forward any concern
- Keep up to date with local arrangement for safeguarding and CRB/DBS checks
- Ensure Leadership Team including Governors and Trustees have had relevant Safeguarding and child protection training at induction and then at later intervals.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) is to provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities, and who will liaise closely with external services. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has the resources to form a more complete picture of a situation and is the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

From September 1, 2022, the following updates from KCSIE will be introduced:

Part one safeguarding information for all staff

Disclosure: the updated guidance includes a new paragraph setting out that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused.

Domestic abuse has been added to the list of safeguarding issues that all staff should be aware of. The guidance makes it clear that domestic abuse can be: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional. It can impact on children through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse and/or experiencing it through their own intimate relationships.

Part two the management of safeguarding

Training for governors and trustees content emphasises that governors and trustees should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, and then at regular intervals. Training should provide them with the knowledge to ensure their school's safeguarding policies and procedures are effective.

Human rights legislation CASPAR briefing. The updated guidance makes it clear that being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, may breach children's rights, as set out in the Human Rights Act.

Equality legislation The guidance sets out the significance of the Equality Act 2010 to school safeguarding, including that schools and colleges: must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their protected characteristics; must consider how they are supporting pupils with protected characteristics; must take positive action, where proportionate, to deal with the disadvantages these pupils face.

For example, by making reasonable adjustments for disabled children and supporting girls if there is evidence they are being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment. It also looks at the implications of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) for education settings. This includes a need to be conscious that pupils with protected characteristics may be more at risk of harm and integrate this into safeguarding policies and procedures.

Online safety additions to the guidance state that governing bodies and proprietors should regularly review the effectiveness of school filters and monitoring systems.

They should ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff are:

- aware of and understand the systems in place
- manage them effectively
- know how to escalate concerns when identified. Schools and colleges should use communications with parents and carers to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. Schools should share information with parents/carers about:

- what systems they have in place to filter and monitor online use
- what they are asking children to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access
- who from the school or college (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Virtual school head guidance has been updated to reflect the extension of the role of virtual school head to include a non-statutory responsibility for oversight of the attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker. Virtual school heads should identify and engage with key professionals to help them understand the role they have in improving outcomes for children.

LGBTQ+ pupil guidance now emphasises the importance of providing LGBTQ+ children with a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

Part three safer recruitment

Applications guidance clarifies that a curriculum vitae (CV) should only be accepted alongside a full application form and is not sufficient on its own to support safer recruitment. Checks Information has been added to highlight that organisations should consider online searches as part of their due diligence checks on shortlisted candidates.

Part four allegations made against/concerns raised in relation to teachers

Learning lessons updates make it clear that learning lessons apply to all cases, not just those which are concluded and found to be substantiated. Low level concerns Information has been updated to make it clear that a low-level concerns policy should contain a clear procedure for confidentiality sharing concerns. The school can decide whether concerns are initially shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/nominated person or directly with the centre lead.

The centre lead should ultimately be informed of all low-level concerns and make the final decision on how to respond. Where appropriate this can be done in consultation with the DSL.

CASPAR briefing guidance also clarifies that low level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers; and schools and colleges should consult with their LADO if unsure whether low-level concerns shared about a member of staff meet the harm threshold.

Part five child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

This section has been expanded to incorporate guidance previously covered in the DfE's Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges advice. It also provides new information, emphasising:

- the importance of explaining to children that the law is in place to protect rather than criminalise them
- the importance of understanding intra-familial harms, and any necessary support for siblings following incidents
- the need for schools and colleges to be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners.

4. Implementation Stages

Our safeguarding Policy is embedded within the company and is implemented via a range of policies and procedures within the organisation. These include:

- Whistleblowing – The Ability to inform on staff/ practices within the organisation
- Grievance and disciplinary procedures – to address breaches of procedures/ policies
- Health and Safety Policy - Mitigating risks to staff and students
- Equal Opportunities Policy – ensuring safeguarding procedures are in line with this policy, around discriminatory abuse and ensuring that the safeguarding policy and procedures are not discriminatory
- Data protection (how records are stored and access to those records)
- Confidentiality (or limited confidentiality policy) ensuring that service users are aware of our duty to disclose
- Staff induction
- Staff training

5. Communications and discussion of safeguarding issues

Commitment to the following communication methods ensure effective communication of safeguarding issues and practice:

- Provision of a clear and effective reporting procedure which encourages reporting of concerns.
- Encouraging open discussion to identify any barriers to reporting so that they can be addressed.
- Inclusion of safeguarding as a discussion prompt during supervision meetings/appraisals to encourage reflection.
- Weekly wellbeing meetings are conducted with staff to ensure they are up to date with the latest information.

Typical support mechanisms would include:

- Debriefing support for staff so that they can reflect on the issues they have dealt with.
- Seeking further support as appropriate e.g. Access to counselling.

Reporting and allegations management

If someone tells you about the abuse, they have experienced:

- Remain calm, no shock or disbelief
- Listen
- Be empathetic
- Do not ask probing questions
- Tell them to report the concerns to a manager or the centre lead

DO NOT

- Put yourself at risk
- Be judgmental
- Make promises you cannot keep
- Tell anyone who does not need to know
- Stage an interview
- Contact the alleged perpetrator

Immediate actions

- Do not handle evidence
- Separate the perpetrator and the victim
- Is anyone at immediate risk? If so, call an ambulance/ Police
- Make a written account as soon as possible with facts, not opinion, date and sign it

If a member of staff is suspected

- Follow the whistleblowing procedure or if a manager is suspected, alert social services
- A manager must support the alleged victim
- Support the wider staff team
- Support the investigation
- Be fair to the alleged perpetrator
- Implement disciplinary procedures and possible suspension without prejudice

All staff have a responsibility to cooperate with management to ensure that BSA offers a safe working environment for students. Safeguarding is a permanent agenda item at management meetings and staff meetings, all staff can raise safeguarding issues at these meetings.

6. Prevention and Awareness

- A code of Conduct – Which provides the standards expected from everyone in the organisation.
- Safer recruitment guidance – which outlines how your organisation minimises risks of harm to others from the people you recruit.
- Communication Guidance – which outlines acceptable and safe ways to communicate within your organisation.
- Digital Technology and social media guidelines – which outlines how to use technology safely and your organisation's standards for using social media.
- Photographs, films, and media guidance – which outline how you will take, store, and use media safely and ethically.

BSA will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its Students, Employees, Volunteers, and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it.

For all employees who are working or volunteering with children, this requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children.
- Recognise a child potentially in need of safeguarding and act.
- Understand how to report a Safeguarding Alert.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with children.
- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Children Policy.

7. Management of Safeguarding

Students in our training Centre

All BSA staff have a collective responsibility for the safeguarding of our students when they are in our training Centre. Students are informed about safeguarding during induction and safeguarding is then embedded throughout the 'Students Journey'. Continually raising awareness is part of the BSA approach to the 'Safer Learner Concept' and Equality and Diversity ethos.

Students on industry placement

Safeguarding is embedded through delivery in the workplace and forms part of our placement vetting processes, raising awareness of the importance of safeguarding with employers.

Escalation Policy (where appropriate)

Occasionally situations arise when staff feel that the decision made by a colleague on a safeguarding case is not a safe decision. Disagreements could arise in several areas, but are most likely to arise around:

- Levels of Needs
- The need for action
- Roles and responsibilities
- Communication

The safety of individuals is the paramount consideration in any professional disagreement and any unresolved issues should be addressed with due consideration to the risks that might exist for the individual.

8. Equality Impact Statement

BSA is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and providing a supportive environment for all members of its community. Our commitment means that this policy has been reviewed to ensure that it does not discriminate (either intentionally or unintentionally) any of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender (including gender identity), race, religion or sexual orientation and meets our obligations under the Equality Act 2010

Appendix A - Code of Conduct for Suppliers

To ensure the safety of our service users, all personnel working with BSA will comply with the code of conduct below.

It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. The supplier is asked to ensure that any person directly employed by them or through a subcontractor agrees to comply with the following:

- A. Work safely and take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour. Avoid any contact which would lead any reasonable person to question your motivation and intentions.
- B. Avoid contact with children/ vulnerable adults.
- C. Never give your personal contact details to children or young people, including your mobile phone number. Contact via Social media sites is also unacceptable
- D. Work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way
- E. Never be in contact with children without supervision from a representative for the site undergoing work.
- F. Stay within the agreed work area and access routes
- G. Obtain permission if you need to go outside the agreed work area or access routes from a representative for the site undergoing works.
- H. Keep staff informed of where you are and what you are doing
- I. Do not use profane or inappropriate language
- J. Dress appropriately, i.e., Dress in the way that:
 - I. Is unlikely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative
 - II. Does not distract, cause embarrassment, or give rise to misunderstanding
 - III. Is absent of any political or contentious slogans
 - IV. Is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive

Appendix B: Dealing with a disclosure of trauma or abuse

Key principles for adult safeguarding

In the safeguarding of adults, BSA are guided by the principles set out in The Care Act 2014 and aim to demonstrate and promote these principles in our work.

- **Empowerment**- People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention**- It is better to act before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality**- The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection**- Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership**- Local solutions through services working with their communities.
- Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting, and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability**- Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

Recognising the signs of abuse

Staff may be particularly well-placed to spot abuse and neglect; the adult may say or do things that hint that all is not well. It may come in the form of a complaint, or an expression of concern. All BSA staff must understand what to do, and where to go locally to get help, support, and advise. It is vital that everyone within the organisation is vigilant on behalf of those unable to protect themselves

Physical Abuse

The physical mistreatment of one person by another which may or may not result in physical injury, this may include slapping, burning, punching, unreasonable confinement, and pinching, force-feeding, misuse of medication, shaking, inappropriate moving and handling.

Signs and indicators

Over or under use of medication, burns in unusual places; hands, soles of feet, sudden incontinence, bruising at various healing stages, bite marks, disclosure, bruising in the shape of objects, unexplained injuries or those that go untreated, reluctance to uncover parts of the body.

Sexual Abuse

Any form of sexual activity that the adult does not want and or have not considered, a sexual relationship instigated by those in a position of trust, rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendos, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing a sexual act, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Signs and indicators

Signs of being abused may include recoiling from physical contact, genital discharge, fear of males or females, inappropriate sexual behaviour in presence of others, bruising to thighs, disclosure, and pregnancy. Abusers may take longer with personal care tasks, use offensive, work alone with students, or show favouritism to clients.

Financial or material abuse

Financial or material abuse- including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Signs and Indicators

This may include not allowing a person access to their money, not spending allocated allowance on the individual, denying access to their money, theft from the individual, theft of property, misuse of benefits. There may be an over protection of money, lack of money, forged signatures, disclosure, inability to pay bills, lack of money after payments of benefits or other, unexplained withdrawals. An abuser may be evasive when discussing finances, goods purchased may be in the possession of the abuser, there may be an over keenness in participating in activities involving an individual's money.

Self-Neglect

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding, lack of self-care to the extent that it threatens personal health and safety. Another type is having the inability to avoid self-harming and failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs.

Signs and Indicators

- Very poor personal hygiene
- Unkempt appearance
- Lack of essential food, clothing, or shelter
- Malnutrition and/or dehydration
- Living in squalid or unsanitary conditions
- Hoarding
- Collecting a large number of animals in inappropriate conditions
- Non-compliance with health or care services
- Inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury
- Neglecting household maintenance.

Discriminatory Abuse

This includes forms of harassment, slurs, or similar treatments; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, and religion or health status and may be the motivation factor in other forms of abuse. It can be personal, a hate crime or institutional.

Signs and indicators

There may be withdrawal or rejection of culturally inappropriate services e.g., food, mixed gender groups or activities. Individuals may simply agree with the abuser for an easier life, there may be disclosure, or someone may display low self-esteem. An abuser may react by saying “I treat everyone the same”, have inappropriate nicknames, be uncooperative, use derogatory language, or deny someone social and cultural contact.

Domestic abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 and over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Sexual
- Emotional
- Financial
- Psychological

A new offence of coercive and controlling behaviour in intimate and familial relationships was introduced into the serious crime act 2015. The offence will impose a maximum 5-year imprisonment, a fine or both.

Signs and Indicators

May include many of those indicators listed under previous categories in this document, including unexplained bruising, withdrawal from activities, work, or volunteering, not being in control of finances, or decision making.

Who might abuse?

Abuse of adults at risk, may be perpetrated by a wide range of people including relatives, family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends and associates, people who deliberately exploit vulnerable people and strangers.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and affect one person or more. Professionals and others should look beyond single incidents or individuals to identify patterns of harm.

Appendix C - Promoting Adult Safeguarding within BSA

Prevention of abuse

To assist in the prevention of abuse the following factors should be considered:

- Rigorous recruitment practices
- Internal guidelines for staff
- Training
- Making Safeguarding Personal and empowering service users

Making Safeguarding Personal

Making Safeguarding personal means it should be person-led and outcome-focused. It should engage the person in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing, and safety.

We aim to empower our service users and provide them with the information they need to make decisions on how to be safe from abuse and reduce risks.

Adults must be assumed to have capacity to make their own decisions and be given all practicable help before anyone treats them as not being able to make their own decisions. Where an adult is found to lack capacity to decide then any action taken, or any decisions made for, or on their behalf, must be made in their best interest.

Appendix D - What should I do if I have a concern?

Staff members have concerns about a student's mental and/or physical health, development, safety, or welfare.

- Log a CP referral on CPMS & alert the DSLs (and Tutor)
- Concerns can be high or low level.
- Speak directly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy (DSL) as soon as possible (certainly within 24 hours but immediately if you believe the student to be a risk if they leave at the end of the day).
- Inform the Centre Manager if no DSL/Deputy available (and consider contacting Children's Social Care (CSC) directly where there is a serious risk if they are not available)



Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy considers:

- Context and history/information available.
- Explanations and contemporaneous life events.
- Uses Lancashire Continuum of Need & Thresholds Guidance.
- Evidence and nature of risk/need.
- Balance of Probabilities.



A Level of Need is Identified

- What level of need is identified (Managing Support internally via college pastoral processes, early help intervention, referral for statutory services)?
- What is the parent's/student's views?
- What services might be accessed:
 - In college; b) via the LA's early help; c) via direct referral to non-statutory agencies.
- Can these meet the level of need identified? If not refer to CSC.



Lancashire CSC/MASH on 0300 123 6720 / 0300 123 6722 (5pm-8am)

Blackpool Families Rock 01253 477299

In an emergency where there is an immediate safeguarding concern the Police may need to be called on 999 or may need to contact on 101 where a criminal offence has also been committed/is suspected but there is no immediate danger.

Appendix E - Talking and listening to children and recording/ notifying concerns

1. If a child wants to confide in you, you SHOULD

- a. Be accessible and receptive and take what is said seriously; reassure victims of abuse that they are being taken seriously, will be supported, and are not creating a problem by reporting abuse of any kind.
- b. Listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace.
- c. Reassure children that that they are right to tell and make sure that they are OK.
- d. Tell the child that you must pass this information on and make a careful record of what was said.

2. You should NEVER

- a. Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse but it is OK to ask for additional information regarding the who, what, where and when but never the WHY.
- b. Make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets' to children.
- c. Assume that someone else will take the necessary action.
- d. Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc or offer opinions.
- e. Speculate or accuse anybody.
- f. Investigate, suggest, or probe for information.
- g. Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved or forget to record what you have been told.
- h. Fail to pass this information on to the correct person (the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy).

3. Children with communication difficulties/ who use alternative or augmented communication

- a. While extra care may be needed to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are interpreted correctly, any suspicions should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children.
- b. Opinion and interpretation will be crucial.

4. Recording should

- a. State who was present, time, date, and place.
- b. Be recorded as a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern and risk.
- c. Be passed to a DSL immediately (certainly with 24 hours); wherever possible, there should be a conversation with a DSL to ensure receipt of the referral. If a DSL is not available, the two Deputy DSLs can be

contacted.

- d. If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL or DDSLs are not available, advice can be sought from the Blackpool Council Social Care Duty Team
- e. Use the student's words wherever possible
- f. Be factual and state exactly what was said.
- g. Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation
- h. Be a chronological account of events.
- i. Record also on CPOMS what the student would like to happen now and how they present.

5. What information do they need to obtain

- a. BSA has NO INVESTIGATIVE ROLE in child protection
- b. Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record and pass on
- c. Ideally, you should be clear about what is being said in terms of WHO, WHAT, WHERE AND WHEN.
- d. If you feel this is a safeguarding concern or if you're not sure, record and pass on immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or DDSL.

6. If you need to ask questions, what is and isn't, OK?

- a. NEVER ask closed questions, i.e., ones which can be answered yes, or No e.g., did he touch you?
- b. NEVER make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit etc
- c. Use only MINIMAL PROMPTS such as 'tell me more about that/everything you remember about that.
- d. Timescales are very important: WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED? Is an important question.

7. What else should we think about in relation to disclosure?

- a. Is there a suitable place for listening to students e.g. not too isolated, easily supervised, quiet etc.
- b. Think carefully about your own body language - how you present will dictate how comfortable a child feels in telling you about something which may be extremely frightening, difficult, and personal.
- c. Be prepared to answer the WHAT HAPPENS NEXT question.
- d. You should never make face-value judgements or assumptions about individual students
- e. Think about how you might react if a student DID approach you. ALL staff need to be prepared to offer a student in this position what they need in terms of protection, reassurance, calmness, and objectivity.

