



Bridging Futures

Empowering every child through inclusion, opportunity and support

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Version: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Author: Claire Galbraith, Education Director

Statement of Intent

At Bridging Futures, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is our highest priority.

We are committed to providing a safe, supportive and nurturing environment where every young person feels valued, respected and protected. Many of the students attending Bridging Futures have experienced barriers to education, trauma, anxiety or additional vulnerabilities. We recognise that safeguarding extends beyond protecting children from harm and includes promoting their wellbeing, listening to their views and helping them feel safe enough to learn.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all adults working within Bridging Futures are expected to remain vigilant, act professionally and report concerns without delay.

Legal Framework

This policy has been written in accordance with current statutory guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Current Edition)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002
- Prevent Duty Guidance
- Equality Act 2010
- UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018

Safeguarding Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Claire Kenny – Therapeutic Director

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Claire Galbraith – Education Director

The DSL is responsible for managing safeguarding concerns, maintaining records, making referrals where appropriate and working alongside commissioning schools, families and external agencies. The Deputy DSL will undertake these responsibilities whenever the DSL is unavailable.

All staff, volunteers and professionals working with Bridging Futures must complete safeguarding training, read the relevant sections of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and report any concerns immediately.

Our Safeguarding Approach

Safeguarding is embedded within everyday practice rather than viewed as a separate responsibility.

Through positive relationships, consistent routines and a trauma-informed approach, we aim to create an environment where students feel safe to talk, know they will be listened to and receive the support they need.

We work closely with commissioning schools, parents, carers and external professionals to ensure safeguarding concerns are shared appropriately and support is coordinated.

Recognising Safeguarding Concerns

Staff should remain alert to any signs that a child may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Concerns may relate to a student's physical safety, emotional wellbeing, attendance, behaviour, online activity or changes in presentation.

Safeguarding concerns may include physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect, child-on-child abuse, criminal or sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, online harm, radicalisation or other forms of vulnerability identified within *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

Responding to Concerns

If a member of staff is concerned about a child, they should listen carefully, remain calm and make an accurate factual record of what has been seen, heard or disclosed.

Concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL will decide on the appropriate course of action, which may include monitoring, Early Help, liaison with the commissioning school or referral to Children's Social Care or other agencies.

Where a child is believed to be at immediate risk of harm, appropriate emergency action will be taken without delay.

Working with Other Agencies

Effective safeguarding relies upon good communication and partnership working.

Bridging Futures works collaboratively with commissioning schools, Children's Social Care, Local Authorities, health professionals, CAMHS, the police and other agencies to ensure students receive appropriate support.

Information will be shared lawfully and proportionately where it is necessary to safeguard a child.

Online Safety

Online safety forms part of our safeguarding responsibilities.

Students are taught how to use technology safely and responsibly, while appropriate filtering and monitoring systems help reduce online risks. Staff remain vigilant to concerns relating to cyberbullying, online exploitation, inappropriate content and unsafe online behaviour.

Further information can be found within the Digital Technology and Online Safety Policy.

Attendance and Welfare

As an alternative provision, we understand that attendance can be affected by anxiety, trauma, health needs and previous negative educational experiences.

Where attendance or engagement becomes a concern, we work proactively with students, families and commissioning schools to understand barriers and provide appropriate support while remaining alert to any safeguarding concerns.

Safer Recruitment and Training

Bridging Futures is committed to safer recruitment and ensuring all appropriate pre-employment checks are completed before staff begin working with students.

All staff receive safeguarding training during induction and regular updates thereafter to ensure they remain informed about current safeguarding guidance and emerging risks.

Confidentiality

Safeguarding information is treated sensitively and shared only where necessary to protect a child or meet legal responsibilities.

No member of staff should promise confidentiality if a child discloses information that raises a safeguarding concern.

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside the:

- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Digital Technology and Online Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Educational Visits Policy

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if changes to legislation or statutory guidance require it.

Review Date: September 2027

Author: Claire Galbraith

Education Director – Bridging Futures

Appendices

Appendix A – Key Safeguarding Contacts

- Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Claire Kenny**
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Claire Galbraith**
- Local Authority Safeguarding Team
- LADO
- Police (999/101)
- NSPCC Helpline

Appendix B – Reporting a Concern

BRIDGING FUTURES REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

