Safeguarding Policy

Protection of child, vulnerable adult and young person policy

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BOM SAFEGUARDING POLICY

This policy follows Birmingham City Council guidelines for safeguarding and includes a whistleblowing policy for staff and appointed freelancers on what to do in the event of a disclosure, with local authority contacts.

The policy is tailored to the range of programmes BOM hosts onsite and whilst off-site, and the various groups we engage. For example, neurodivergent adults participating in our skills programmes who have different communication needs and access mental health services, or children and young people engaging through our schools education programmes.

Staff working with children, young people and vulnerable adults receive Safeguarding training to update knowledge and ensure our policies and processes are up to date. BOM has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. Holders of these posts are currently:

Designated Safeguarding Lead
Louise Latter
Head of Programme
07480 376315
louise@bom.org.uk / safeguarding@bom.org.uk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Adanna Davis-Waite
Senior Engagement Producer
07988 212079
adanna@bom.org.uk / safeguarding@bom.org.uk

See the below for our safeguarding policy, titled ‘Protection of child, vulnerable adult and young person policy’.

Protection of child, vulnerable adult and young person person policy

We at BOM are committed to practise that protects children from harm. Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise BOM’s responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that cause children harm.

BOM does not condone child abuse, or the abuse of young people or vulnerable adults in any way and endeavours to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults; all suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to quickly, efficiently and effectively.

BOM aims to create an environment in which children, young people & vulnerable adults are listened to and valued and respected as individuals. Their views and opinions are to be taken seriously. Children, young people & vulnerable adults involved in projects are encouraged to be involved in the decision-making processes, in an encouraging environment.

The purpose of BOM’s Child, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy is to promote good practice, safeguard children and staff by:

- Providing children, young people and vulnerable adults with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of working with BOM staff, freelance artists, volunteers & other agencies.
- Allow all staff / volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues and where necessary know what procedure to follow should any cases raise suspicion.

Procedure

The policy has been broken down into context, guidelines and advice. If at any point any member of staff is in doubt, then they should speak firstly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Louise Latter) or in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All new staff members are provided with this Policy within the BOM Employee handbook. The DSL leads a Safeguarding update quarterly in a whole Team Meeting. They must remind staff of processes and duties.

Staff working directly with children, young people and vulnerable adults must also complete Safeguarding training within 3 weeks of their start date. Training can be requested at any time by an employee to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Context of Child / Vulnerable Adult Abuse

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can create strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Staff must set a good example to children, young people & vulnerable adults attending workshops etc. This includes not drinking alcohol or taking controlled substances while in the presence of children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school, and workshop environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with children, young people & vulnerable adults in order to harm them. A coach, workshop leader, arts worker, teacher, official or volunteer who will have regular contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults, will be an important link in identifying cases where children, young people or vulnerable adults need protection.

Categories and Forms of Abuse

Children and Young People who abuse others (Child on Child Abuse)

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures. Practitioners should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. We should not tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, or “just having a laugh”.

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences as described under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. This includes: rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault. The advice sets out that sexual harassment is ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. It is likely to violate a child’s dignity, and / or makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or creates a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be especially vulnerable. Disabled and deaf children are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children.

Risk Assessment – Sexual Violence / Harassment

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment for a report of sexual violence should consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support;
- Whether there may have been other victims;
- The alleged perpetrator(s);
- The time and location of the incident
- All the other children, (and, if appropriate, adult participants and staff) especially any actions

that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms.

There is no clear dividing line between abusive behaviour and normal childhood behaviour;

- Many adults who abuse children repeatedly established this pattern of behaviour in childhood or adolescence, but a single incident of abuse does not indicate that a young person is likely to abuse again; and
- Some young people who abuse have themselves been abused, but this cannot be assumed in any particular case.

The needs of the victim and the needs of the alleged perpetrator must be considered separately. In addition to safeguarding the identified victim, agencies must consider whether the alleged perpetrator seems to pose a risk to any other children. Children and young people who abuse others are responsible for their abusive behaviour, and safeguarding action must include addressing their behaviour and its causes.

The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. There is no clear boundary between incidents which should be regarded as abusive and incidents which are properly dealt with as bullying, sexual experimentation etc. Issues relating to the safety of victims and potential victims must be discussed first and completely separately from any issues relating to the alleged perpetrator.

If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with under these procedures: bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard a young person's behaviour as abusive if:

- There is a large difference in power (e.g. age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
- The perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or there are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

- Staff should also be aware that the abuse could be related to:
- Sexual harassment and/or sexual violence
- Group behaviour - there may be evidence suggesting that two or more abusers have acted together, and / or that more than one child has been abused.
- Cyberbullying - potential uses of technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

- Victims of crime - there is the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victim of violent crime, including the risk that such young people may respond to this by abusing other, younger or weaker children.
- Gangs - children and young people may be vulnerable to abuse by other young because of, and any action required to make the location safer where this has taken place at BOM.

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Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Members of Staff

Because of their frequent contact with children and vulnerable young people, staff may have allegations of child abuse or a safeguarding issue made against them. BOM recognises that an allegation of child abuse or any other safeguarding allegation made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and that investigation is thorough and not subject to delay.

BOM recognises that the Children's Acts of 1989 and 2004 state that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within the BOM will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way. This is also supported by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act of 2006.

Safe Working Code of Conduct

Introduction

BOM seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment where the welfare and health and safety of participants is paramount. Staff should seek to act professionally at all times, but we recognise that tensions and misunderstanding can occur in the context of interaction between staff and participants. This guidance aims to help staff safeguard participants and reduce the risk of conduct which could be mistakenly interpreted as improper and lead to allegations being made against individuals.

Principles

1. Staff are responsible for their own actions;
2. Staff should be seen to work in a transparent way;
3. Staff should act in a way that reflects the nature of their role as a person ‘in a position of trust’ both in their professional and personal lives;

All staff should report any incident which may give rise to concern to the DSL / DDSL.
All staff and work placements providers must be aware of and follow the BOM’s safeguarding procedures. Staff who breach this code of conduct may be subject to BOM’s disciplinary procedures. Serious breach of this code may result in a referral being made to an external or statutory agency such as the local authority LADO or the Police. All work placements providers must report any incidents which may give rise to concern to the Work Placement Team Leader.

Duty of Care

All staff have a duty of care to keep participants safe and are accountable for the way in which they use their authority and position of trust. This duty can be best exercised through the development of

caring but professional relationships. Staff should avoid situations where their motives can be questioned. If concerns or incidents arise staff are to:

1. Report incidents causing concern;
2. Record discussions and actions taken.

Confidentiality

Staff should never share information about participants in a casual manner. All concerns about child protection issues should be reported using the BOM safeguarding concern/incident form and submitted to the DSL/DDSL.

Behaviour

Staff should adopt high standards of personal conduct at all timesPhysical contact with participants must be avoided at all times;
Never share personal information;
Do not swear or use offensive, sexual or discriminatory language;
Do not use demeaning or racist comments (directly or indirectly);
Do not use banter or jokes as a form of communication, these can be offensive to others;
Never make sexual remarks to a participant or discuss personal sexual relationships;
Never make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of participants;
Avoid any communication which could be interpreted as sexually provocative;
End the discussion if it becomes uncomfortable or embarrassing;
Never make personal comments which humiliate a participant or may seem to do so;
Dress in a manner appropriate to the workplace setting;
Follow the Acceptable use of IT & Social Media Policy and report any breaches in or outside BOM;
Never act in a way that can be perceived threatening or sexualised;

Under no circumstances should staff access or view inappropriate images. Storing or disseminating such material is illegal and if proven will lead to the person being barred from working with young people/vulnerable adults;

- Do not transport participants in your own vehicle under any circumstances;
- Do not engage/befriend participants via social media;
- Maintain expected standards of behaviour inside and outside BOM.

Social Contact

Staff should never make contact with a participant outside of BOM for the purpose of friendship via email, telephone or social media.

- Do not accept gifts that could be construed as bribes;
- Never give out personal contact details, personal mobile phone numbers or personal email addresses;

- Never engage with participants from their personal social media/email accounts;
- Report any suspected infatuation;
- Report any situation which you may feel compromises your professional standing.

Physical Contact, Intervention and Control of participants

It is not necessary to have physical contact with participants even when they are distressed, and this should be avoided at all times. Try to defuse a situation before it escalates. Never endanger your own safety.

One to One Situations

Staff are vulnerable to accusations when working alone with a participant. If possible leave the door open or use a room with a window in the door. Never meet a participant away from BOM unless the DSL has given written permission.

Educational Visits and Offsite Activities / events

Staff should take extra care in less formal situations and remember they are still in a position of trust.

Conduct & Good Practice Guidelines

All BOM personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate:

- Always working in an open environment e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets.
- Treating all children, young people & vulnerable adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust, which empowers children, young people & vulnerable adults to share in the decision-making process.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Being an excellent role model for children, young people & vulnerable adults in dealings with other people.
- Always putting the welfare of each child, young person or vulnerable adult first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Recognising that disabled children or young people may be more vulnerable to abuse than other children or young people.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with participants (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child, young person or vulnerable adult).
- Only touching participants when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity. Where contact is needed, seeking informed consent from participants prior to any physical contact.
- Making sure disabled participants are informed of and are comfortable with any necessary physical contact.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children getting to and from the venue where arts activity is taking place.

- Ensuring that if mixed groups are taken away from the site, a male and female member of staff should always accompany them.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- To ensure that all activities are up to date with health & safety procedures.
- To keep informed about legislation and policies for protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Restraint should only be used as a last resort i.e. to prevent a child, young person or vulnerable adult from harming themselves or someone else. The child, young person or vulnerable adult should be told why they are being restrained. For example, " I am restraining you, in order to prevent you from running in front of that car."
- Older children should be sent to the toilet in pairs and be told to wait for each other before returning. When dealing with younger children, staff should not accompany children to the toilet alone. In this instance, a staff member should take children to the toilet in pairs, and remain outside both the cubicle and the bathroom itself.

Prevent, Referral and Intervention Processes for Radicalisation and Extremism

Any staff working with children or adults should always speak with the DSL as soon as possible when trying to identify and respond to concerns about people who may be vulnerable to being drawn into violent extremist activity.

Any member of staff who identifies such concerns, for example as a result of observed behaviour or reports of conversations to suggest the child supports terrorism and/or violent extremism, must report these concerns by completing the BOM Concerns and incident reporting form and once completed sending it to the BOM Designated Safeguarding Lead for assessment (safeguarding@bom.org.uk)

The DSL must discuss any such concerns with the local police / Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU). After consultation with the police and in light of any further information gathered about the child and the family, if it is considered there are grounds for further involvement, a multi-agency assessment meeting (usually involving the child, parents and relevant professionals) should be convened to determine the appropriate response and how this should be delivered.

The aim is to ensure an early identification of children's vulnerabilities and promote a coordinated response, wherever possible within universal provision or through targeted interventions and the Early Help Assessment process. The emphasis should be on supporting vulnerable children and young people, rather than informing on or "spotting" those with radical or extreme views.

In exceptional cases, it may be considered that a child or young person is involved or potentially involved in supporting or pursuing extremist behaviour. This may be, for example, where the child is part of a family with known extremists (e.g. people who are currently subject to criminal proceedings or who have been convicted of terrorism related offences). Where this is the case, a referral must be made to Children's Services under the Referrals Procedure and the police must be informed. Further investigation by the police will be required, prior to other assessments and interventions.

While the nature of the risk may raise security issues, the process should not be seen as different from dealing with the likelihood of significant harm or vulnerability due to the exposure to other influences. Consideration should be given to the possibility that sharing information about the concerns with the parents may increase the risk to the child and therefore may not be appropriate at the referral stage.

Consideration should also be given to the need for an emergency response - this will be extremely rare, but examples are where there is information that a violent act is imminent or where weapons or other materials may be in the possession of a young person or member of his or her family. In this situation a 999 call must be made. Where there is involvement as a result of the concerns, any provision of services should be subject to regular reviews until it is deemed appropriate to end the agreed response.

Early Help Assessment Process

The Early Help Assessment process remains the primary vehicle for assessing vulnerable young people, including those who may be vulnerable to violent extremist messages. However, where a referral is made to Children's Services, given the complexity of this issue and the need to access materials that may only be available within the appropriate Counter Terrorism Unit, cases will be subject to an initial Vulnerability Assessment as identifying vulnerabilities is necessary for effective intervention and the understanding of individual risk management.

Information received from the team will be used to guide the decision-making process. Most children and young people do not become involved in violent extremism. Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism. Cases may not appear to be specific to the threat of radicalisation. For example, they might relate to other needs of the individual such as in respect of mental health support, housing, relationships, offending behaviour or drug and alcohol issues. There may however sometimes be a need for specialist interventions in relation to de-radicalisation and disengagement. These will be commissioned as required.

Understanding and Recognising Risks and Susceptibility of Radicalisation

Children and young adults can be drawn into violence or they can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means. These can include through the influence of family members or friends and/or direct contact with extremist groups and organisations or, increasingly, through the internet. This can put a person at risk of being drawn into criminal activity and has the potential to cause Significant Harm. The risk of radicalisation is the product of a number of factors and identifying this risk requires that staff exercise their professional judgement, seeking further advice as necessary. It may be combined with other vulnerabilities or may be the only risk identified. Potential indicators of an individual becoming radicalised include:

- Use of inappropriate language;
- Possession of violent extremist or illegal literature;
- Behavioural changes;
- The expression of extremist views inside or outside BOM;
- Advocating violent actions and means;

- Association with known extremists/groups;
- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology;
- Showing sympathy for extremist causes;

Research shows that indicators of vulnerability which may make an individual susceptible to being radicalised can include:

- Identity Crisis - Distance from cultural/religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them;
- Personal Crisis - Family tensions; sense of isolation; adolescence; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging;
- Personal Circumstances - Migration; local community tensions; events affecting country or region of origin; alienation from UK values; having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy;
- Unmet Aspirations - Perceptions of injustice; feeling of failure; rejection of civic life; Criminality - Experiences of imprisonment; poor resettlement/reintegration; previous involvement with criminal groups;
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters;
- Articulating support for violent extremist causes or leaders;
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations;
- Graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes;
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour;

However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of exploitation for the purposes of violent extremism.

Support

All concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance.

Counter Terrorism Policing (Action Counters Terrorism) to report a concern online or call 0800 789 321 (dedicated confidential anti-terrorism hotline for the UK).

Disclosure of concern (In Position of Trust)

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If it becomes necessary to consult outside BOM, they should speak in the first instance, to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The DSL should make an initial assessment of the allegation, consulting with the CEO. Where the allegation is considered to be either a potential criminal act or indicates that the child has suffered,

is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the matter should be reported immediately to the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership. In the case of third party workers BOM will liaise with the LADO, Birmingham Safeguarding Childrens Partnership (BSCP) and/or the Police in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024 para 382.

Concerns can be reported to BSCP here:
https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/report-a-concern
It is important that the DSL does not investigate the allegation. The initial assessment should be on the basis of the information received and is a decision whether or not the allegation warrants further investigation.

Other potential outcomes are:

- The allegation represents inappropriate behaviour or poor practice by the member of staff and is neither potentially a crime nor a cause of significant harm to the child or vulnerable young person. The matter should be addressed in accordance with BOM's disciplinary procedures.
- The allegation can be shown to be false because the facts alleged could not possibly be true.

Project / Workshop Best Practice

A Risk Assessment of all projects is to be undertaken at the outset by the relevant project staff. This Risk Assessment will need to include child protection issues. The results of this Risk Assessment are to be fully discussed and the project amended as need be. Risk is to be monitored throughout the duration of a project by the appropriate staff.

Health & Safety must be strictly monitored and in addition to BOM's normal procedures the best practice outlined at the bottom of this policy must also be observed.

When working with children and young people, it is essential that someone from the community group / school / educational establishment is present and therefore meeting their requirement for ensuring the safety of that community group / school / educational establishment in the setting.

The principle of risk assessment is to consider:
- Things that can go wrong in a project
- Likelihood of these things going wrong
- Impact of these things going wrong

Once this has been completed you must deal with any identified risk and reduce or remove the risk and responsibilities allocated for all areas including child protection.

Accidents & Injuries Best Practice Guidelines

If a member of staff or workshop leader accidentally hurts a child, young person or vulnerable adult and he/she seems to be distressed in any way, sexually aroused by their actions or appears to have misunderstood/misinterpreted something they have done, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then write a report of the incident and the parents or carer will be informed of the incident.

If a child is injured while either at BOM or while participating in a BOM project, it must be recorded by completing a BOM concern and incident reporting form. This form is designed to report any safeguarding incidents or concerns. It should be completed by the worker who has been disclosed to, who witnessed the incident, was most directly involved or who provided first aid if relevant. Once completed it must be submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for assessment and further action.

Personal Safety Best Practice

BOM's protection policy is as much to safeguard the people within the organisation as it is to protect vulnerable people and the following must always be observed in order to protect each individual against false allegations.

Please remember it is inappropriate for staff, workshop leaders and collaborators to maintain contact or friendly relationships with children, young people or vulnerable adults. It is equally inappropriate to meet with children, young people or vulnerable adults whom they work with in person out of work time. Workers must maintain professional working relationships at all times.

The following practices should only be sanctioned in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge or the child's parents or carer.

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Taking or dropping off a child to an event or their home.

The following should never be sanctioned & practises to be avoided. You should never:
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games or play.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive or offensive comments to a child, young person or vulnerable adult, even in fun.
- Humiliate or upset a child, young person or vulnerable adult as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by a child, young person or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for a child, young person or vulnerable adult, which they can do for themselves.
- Invite or allow children, young people or vulnerable adults to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

Recruitment and training of staff / freelancers / volunteers

BOM recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Pre-selection checks must include an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

External Speakers / Artists / Workshop Leaders Vetting Procedure

1. Policy Statement

BOM is committed to creating an environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and where diversity is valued. This policy outlines the procedures relating to events involving the use of external staffing regardless of who is organising them.
It also details our approach to ensuring that we are protecting both staff and participants and the reputation of BOM whilst following the legislation that we're responsible for upholding. This policy is written with reference to the Prevent Duty contained within Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The Duty states that specified authorities including Further Education, in the exercise of their functions, must have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"

Scope

- To provide an environment where freedom of expression and speech are protected balanced with the need to ensure that BOM is not providing a platform for extremist views.

To provide clearly defined and effective procedures to ensure that the law is upheld.

- To collaborate with others to reach sound, evidenced judgments about proposed external staff ensuring that BOM can meet their legal obligations.

To encourage and provide a balance of opinion at any talk, discussion or debate
To provide clear instructions for organising an event with external contribution e.g. speaker, representatives, film and guidance for researching an external speaker.

- Freedom of speech and expression
- 'Academic freedom' is a term used to describe the law that allows for open and honest debate in an academic context. BOM will uphold the right to freedom of speech within the law.

External speakers and their responsibilities

An external speaker or visitor is used to describe any individual or organisation who is not a participant or staff member for BOM or one of its contracted partners and who has been invited to speak to / work with participants and/or staff. This includes any individual who is a participant or staff member from another institution. It also includes the main contact from any external venue hire client who is paying to use BOM's facilities.

An event is any event, presentation, visit, activity or initiative organised by a staff member that is being held on BOM premises or where BOM is being represented by a stand on non-BOM premises e.g. at an exhibition, school event or fair. It also includes events where external speakers are streamed live into an event or a pre-recorded film is shown, or activity being held on BOM premises but organised by external venue hire clients

BOM premises or facilities must not be used to promote opinions that are contrary to fundamental British values (democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths or beliefs) attacks upon members of the UK armed forces whether in the UK or overseas.

Guidance for BOM staff organising an event with an external speaker or venue hire client
The CEO and the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed of any events that involve external speakers through this procedure. A senior member of staff must complete a risk assessment of a proposed event to assure compliance with the conditions in paragraph 4 of this procedure.

No event involving any external speakers may be publicised or considered confirmed until the speaker has been cleared through the procedure detailed in this policy. This includes advertisement through any social media platform.
BOM reserves the right to cancel, prohibit or delay any event with an external speaker if the policy is not followed or if health, safety and security criteria cannot be met.

Any room booking / event organisation with an external speaker involved must be made no later than 14 days before the date of the event. This is to allow for the organiser to have made adequate safeguarding checks as well as allowing time for alterations to the event if necessary. Any request made outside of this timeframe will be rejected unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances.

The individual/group organising an external speaker should conduct brief research into the proposed speaker. If in doubt as to the suitability of a speaker, they should refer the decision to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Persons for a decision.

In making a decision the Safeguarding/Deputy Safeguarding Persons will have regard to whether any of the following apply:
- The speaker is a person or belongs to a group on/or linked to the UK Government list of proscribed terror organisations https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2 ;
- The speaker is known to have previously expressed views that would be in breach of the conditions in section 4.

The Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Persons may approve the event/speaker unconditionally, set conditions on the event/speaker or refuse permission for the event/speaker.

Induction

All new employees must read this Safeguarding Policy which is contained within the employee handbook, and confirm on the Safe HR platform that they have read it. In addition, all new employees will be asked to carry out a DBS Check if they are to be in contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults as part of their work.

Sensitive Information Guidelines

All notes relating to Child Protection will be kept in restricted access files for the duration of an investigation. After an investigation, the result will be recorded but all notes destroyed in a responsible manner.

Rights and Confidentiality

Should a complaint be made against a BOM employee, they will be made aware of their rights under BOM's disciplinary procedures. In the case of volunteers or freelancers, employment may be suspended while an investigation takes place, or terminated. Each party involved has the right to confidentiality under the Data protection Act 1988.

Digital Safeguarding and Online Activity

BOM provides controlled internet access for staff, participants and visitors through a managed wireless network. Two separate wireless networks are in use, one for participants and public users and one for staff.

Internet traffic on the student and public network uses a cloud based filtering service which blocks adult, explicit and malicious web sites before a connection is made. Staff traffic uses a separate secure service which blocks malicious sites while allowing wider access for work and research.

The router firewall enforces the use of these filtering services and blocks attempts to use other domain name services. Basic logging of blocked requests and security events is enabled. These logs are reviewed regularly by the Chief Technology Officer and retained in line with our data protection and safeguarding duties.

Further technical details of the filtering and monitoring arrangements are set out in the IT Acceptable Use Policy.

Best Practice Guidelines for responding to allegations

There are various ways in which somebody at BOM may become aware of the actual or likely occurrence of abuse. These include:

- A child, young person or vulnerable adult telling a member of staff that they are being abused or neglected.
- An adult informing a member of staff that a child, young person or vulnerable adult has told them, or that they strongly believe that a child is being abused.
- An adult observes some signs of physical injury or behavioural indicators for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation.

It is not the responsibility of BOM employees or BOM's Designated Safeguarding Lead to decide if abuse or neglect is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act upon any concerns. If you suspect abuse or neglect, or are in any doubt, you must speak to BOM's Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.
BOM will assure all employees / volunteers / contractors that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

How to report safeguarding concerns

BOM will assure all employees / volunteers / contractors that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports their concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

There will be situations when the nature of your concern is unclear and you wish to seek advice. In these instances discuss these with BOM's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

A detailed record should be made at the time of the disclosure or concern, by downloading the BOM Safeguarding concern / incident reporting form. This should be completed by the worker to whom disclosures have been made, or who was present at the time of an incident. This should be submitted to the BOM Designated Safeguarding Lead for completion and assessment.

If in exceptional circumstances the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputies are not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral is made to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) immediately.

We recognise that all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection are confidential. The DSL will disclose any information about a young person or vulnerable adult to other members of staff strictly on a need-to- know basis.

All concerns will be received by the DSL who will seek advice/make a judgement as to whether a referral to Social Care Services or the police or any other action is necessary. This includes situations where any professional feels that a young person has abused another child or young person.

In the event of a disclosure:

- Don't delay acting on a disclosure
- Don't ever promise confidentiality
- Don't ever promise that 'everything will be alright'
- Don't interrogate the child, young person or vulnerable adult with lots of questions. REMEMBER it is not your job to carry out an investigation, that role is to be performed by the relevant Child / Youth Service and / or the police.
- Don't cast doubt on what a child, young person or vulnerable adult is telling you. It has probably taken a great deal of courage for them to speak to you.
- Don't ask leading questions like' did they do X to you' or 'did they touch you there'.
- Don't make value judgments about the abuser. Remember that in many instances a child, young person or vulnerable adult still loves the abuser.
- Don't say anything that could make the child, young person or vulnerable adult feel responsible for the abuse e.g. 'why did you not tell someone before' or 'are you sure this has happened to you'.
- Don't panic. Think – Feel – Act. You need to have all three in balance when responding to suspected or alleged abuse. Emotion can get in the way of rational thinking, and hasty action can be counter productive.

Do

- Do remain calm & in control
- Do receive what is said.

- Do take a child, young person, or vulnerable adult seriously.
- Do listen without shock or disbelief.
- Do reassure the child, young person or vulnerable adult that they have done 'the right thing' in telling someone.
- Do clarify and check out what you are being told.
- Do tell the child, young person or vulnerable adult you are glad they have told you and acknowledge that they have been very brave in telling you.
- Do be honest about your position: who you will have to tell and why.
- Do make sure the child, young person or vulnerable adult knows what you will be doing next.
- Do, as soon as possible after the disclosure, make a written record, using the child, young person or vulnerable adults words where possible. Make sure this record is signed and dated.
- Do refer at once to BOM's Designated Person.
- Do remember the rules of confidentiality. Avoid telling interested colleagues about the incident. Does this person really need to know?
- Do give the child, young person or vulnerable adult information about confidential resources such as Child Line.
- Do think of yourself. Do not forget the impact that this disclosure will have on you. If you feel you would like additional support following a disclosure please contact BOM's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

How to Deal with Whistle Blowing
Children, young people & vulnerable adults are encouraged to raise any concerns they have regarding abuse or unethical behaviour with either the project / workshop leader or if the concern relates to that person, with BOM's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Equally, staff, contractors and Project Leaders etc are encouraged to contact BOM's Designated Safeguarding Lead should they have a concern.

The matter will then be investigated. BOM will support both parties until such time as the matter has been resolved.

If the concern is with the DSL, concerns can be raised with the CEO by completing the same form and emailing it to safeguarding@bom.org.uk. All live safeguarding concerns are escalated to the CEO, who informs the Board of Directors.

Mentoring young people / vulnerable adults

This section refers specifically to our mentor and internship schemes, working with young people / adults who are neurodivergent and may have other mental health / behavioural / emotional issues.

Discussions within mentoring are confidential unless the mentor deems the mentee to be a risk to themselves or others.

We define risk as:

Risk of harm to self: suicide; deliberate self-harm; accidental self-harm; self-neglect; being exploited/abused Risk of harm to others: violence; aggression; neglect of dependents; use of weapons; arson; exploiting/abusing others
Risk of harm to self/others: substance misuse; offending

In the event of this, the mentor must report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and we will do the following:

- Mentor and Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the level of risk (scale of 1 to 5, 1 being low and 5 being high)
- Decide whether to encourage the participant to stay within our building whilst we follow our procedure. Restraint should only be used as a last resort i.e. to prevent a child, young person or vulnerable adult from harming themselves or someone else. The child, young person or vulnerable adult should be told why they are being restrained.
- Log the conversation in as much detail as possible.
- Keep the mentee informed of our actions (let them know we are concerned for their safety and that we are here to support them.)

Where necessary, staff will either call the police on 999 (emergency), 101 (non emergency) or contact / signpost participants to the city council adult social services (see useful contacts at the end of this policy).

Best Practice Guidelines for use of Images

BOM sometimes uses photographs and videos of children, young people or vulnerable adults in our publications, on social media and on our website, to publicise events, services or to celebrate events & projects. If you are responsible for providing these images for use by BOM you must obtain written permission from an appropriate person (i.e. a parent or guardian / school staff) before they can be published, using one of BOM's image release forms.

Permission must be obtained in advance by anyone wishing to take photographs or videos within the building or of any BOM project. In this manner BOM can prevent any unauthorised images being published.

Photography / video will not be allowed in workshops etc without prior consent. Parents, carers and participants will be informed in advance. Any photographers / filmmakers arriving without prior arrangement will be turned away.

Parental or carer consent must be gained for taking and using photographs or videos of a child, young person or vulnerable adult. When dealing with young people, it is good practice to seek their permission directly as well as asking their parent or carer.

When using photographs of a vulnerable adult, the use of images must be discussed with their carer or support worker as well as the person themselves.
When using photographs or videos of children or young people, they must be labelled in such a way that it is not possible to identify a particular child or young person. For example, children or young people should be named alphabetically rather than left to right, schools or meeting times / locations should not be referred to.

We will not use the personal details or full names (which means first name and surname) of any child, young persons or vulnerable adult in a photographic image on our website, or in a photographic image in any of our printed publications. BOM will not photograph / video children, young people or vulnerable adults wearing name labels.

Permission to use a photograph / video extends only to the specified use. Therefore, employees will need to obtain fresh permission if they wish to use the image again in a different context.
We will not include personal e-mail or postal addresses, or telephone numbers on pictures, on our website or in printed publications.

We may use group photographs with very general labels, such as 'a group photo' or 'participants in a BOM workshop'.

We will only use images of participants who are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of such images being used inappropriately.

BOM will endeavour to use images focusing on activities taking place, for example the hands of a participant using a computer.

Relevant Legislation

The Children Act 1989 Amended 2004 Human Rights Act 1998
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 The Protection of Children Act 1999 The Police Act 1997
Data Protection Act 1998
The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 Education Reform Act 1988

Useful Contacts
For current guidance on safeguarding, legislation and resources see www.everychildmatters.gov.uk
Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS): Opening hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
Telephone: 0121 303 1888
Emergency out-of-hours: Telephone: 0121 675 4806
If you have access to secure e-mail: secure.cass@birmingham.gcsx.gov.uk, if you do not have a access to a secure e-mail: cass@birmingham.gov.uk
Outside of normal office hours please call 0121 675 4806 for the Emergency Duty Team Adult Social Services: Email: ACAP@birmingham.gov.uk
Telephone: 0121 303 1234 Monday to Thursday: 8:45am to 5:15pmFriday: 8:45am to 4:15pm 0121 675 4806 Emergency/out of hours.

NSPCC is a registered charity established to prevent cruelty to children. They provide a range of services for children and their families. They also provide a child protection helpline and there4me.com which is an online service for children. Childline, a helpline service for children is now also part of the NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk

Disclosure Barring Service: exists to help organisations identify people who are unsuitable for certain types of work, especially work involving access to or contact with children and other vulnerable members of society, by making "disclosures" of any criminal, police or similar records https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview

Governance and Risk Register

Once a disclosure or safeguarding concern has been raised, this will be logged on the Safeguarding Risk Register and escalated via the Designated Safeguarding Lead up to the CEO.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the risk and put in place a mitigation plan. Any serious risks that may have wider consequences for BOM – legally, reputationally, or any other impact which may prevent BOM from carrying out our duties or flags where a serious danger to others presents, will also be logged onto BOM's Operational Risk Register which is shared with BOM's Board of Directors.

The CEO keeps BOM's Board of Directors updated of live safeguarding risks which are added to the Operational Risk Register. This is to ensure that, from a governance perspective, there are clear and adequate plans in place to mitigate risks, and that there is the necessary support to BOM's staff team to see through this process.

Transparency is also necessary to make the Board aware of any issues that might cause damage to BOM more widely as an organisation, so that the Board can fulfil their legal obligations as Directors. Confidentiality and personal data will be respected at all times, in line with our Data Protection policy.

Health & Safety in education activity, especially with reference to child / vulnerable adults protection.

Recommendations are that:

- Groups should not be of more than 26
- An appropriate number of legally responsible adults are present
- There must be adequate space
- There must be access to a telephone
- All equipment must meet safety standards
- Risk assessments are to be carried out
- A first aid box must be readily available
- A member of staff, qualified in first aid must be present.
- Regular & appropriate drinks must be provided
- Special needs and disabilities are catered for
- No child under the age of five should be left at events
- No school group, youth group or group from a care setting should be left without a legally responsible staff member present
- The artist or arts facilitators should know fire evacuation procedures and should inform the group of them.
- Children and young people should have a named person to who they may report any worries or concerns

Contact names and telephone numbers for named safeguarding staff should be visibly displayed, for instance on posters.