

Bolton Information and Advisory Service SEND- Safeguarding statement and Policy

Bolton information and advisory service (IAS) provide free information, advice and support to parents, carers, children and young people, in relation to special educational needs and/or disabilities. The purpose of this policy statement is:

- **to protect children and young people who receive IAS's services, from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services**
- **to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection**

It will also outline the procedure that we will take where we have concerns about a safeguarding matter.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of IAS.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from nspcc.org.uk/childprotection.

This policy statement should be **read alongside our other organisational policies**, procedures, guidance and other related documents which are available in the induction pack held at the IAS office, and of which many can be found on our website, www.iasbolton.com

IAS believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

IAS recognise that:

- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take. Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues. Extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

IAS will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people, who is also reportable to the Advisory Board
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- engaging with the Local Authority online safety training
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made, including through references and enhanced DBS
- recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- ensuring that we have effective complaints measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Nominated child protection lead:

Cheryl Wyatt- Head of Service

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What IAS will do where we are concerned about a child

If a member of IAS staff have reason to feel concerned about a child or young person they are working with, we may need to refer this to social care. When we are considering making a referral, we refer to **Bolton's Framework for Action Threshold** Document in the first instance to assist us in determining what level of support is right for a child at that time. We may also discuss this internally through supervision, with the Safeguarding in Education Team, or LADO, depending on what the nature of the concern is. Additionally, the IAS officer will write up precisely their concerns and what has happened, which will be shared with the Head of Service, and social care colleagues, should this be required.

If we are concerned that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering immediate significant harm, we will report this without delay, to the Duty social care team.

If our concern is not immediate, but we believe that a child and their family are in need of intensive support from Targeted Early Help Services or require protection or an assessment by a Social Worker, we will complete Bolton Council's Online Referral Form through the Integrated Front Door. It is important for us to be open and honest with families throughout our involvement with them regarding what information is shared about them, why it is being shared and with whom it is being shared with. We must have the consent of families for all referrals to the Integrated Front Door, **unless doing so may place the child/ren and increased risk of harm**. If we are unsure if a referral needs to be made, we may still contact social care to discuss our concerns. We may contact the social care consultation helpline,

and will speak with a Social Worker to get you advice on whether we need to complete a referral or not. This will be anonymous and no details about a specific family shared.

Reviewed March 2025