

SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURES



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INTRODUCTION

Belfast School of Theology (BST) is committed to ensuring a safe and secure environment for all those who work, study and visit on our premises located on the Stranmillis University College campus (SUC). BST recognizes that it has a legal duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all vulnerable groups who access its services and facilities and a wider Public Protection Duty. BST also recognizes that children and vulnerable groups may be at risk of harm from sources outside their control. Where signs of such harm are apparent, BST encourages these to be reported to the appropriate external agency.

BST is committed to a proactive approach towards achieving these outcomes through sound procedures and good practice as outlined later in the policy.

PURPOSE

This policy and its procedures outline BST's approach to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk while on its premises to provide clear guidelines and procedures to mitigate, wherever possible, their risk of being harmed.

BELFAST SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY GOAL

Belfast School of Theology's goal is to equip 21st century disciples through theological education that is orientated towards a lived-out faith that impacts the world.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

This policy has been developed in the context where BST is located in Northern Ireland and subject to the laws of that jurisdiction. The central legal framework in respect of the welfare of children is set out in the Children (NI) Order 1995. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012). In addition to the legislation to which BST is subject, there are other policies that place specific obligations on staff and students not to engage in any behaviour which is liable to cause harm to others.

BST regulations and procedures include:

- Staff Handbook and Associated Policies including Data Protection Policy
- Student Handbook and Associated Policies including Acceptable Use of ICT Policy and Procedure (including social media policy), Admissions Policy, Sexual Misconduct and Harassment Policy and the Student Code of Conduct

SCOPE

This policy, procedure and associated guidance documents apply to all BST led and BST premises-based activities involving children, young people under the age of 18 and adults at risk. The policy applies to all those who work or visit BST premises.

This includes:

- BST staff, including permanent and part-time employees.
- All students referred to hereafter as 'students'.
- All visitors to BST, including prospective applicants (student and staff), contractors, visiting lecturers, volunteers and other members of the general public referred to hereafter as 'visitors.'
- Students working on ministry placements outside BST that involve children/adults at risk.



DEFINITIONS

Child

Child(ren): a person/persons under the age of 18 years. The definition of a 'child or young person' applies to a person under the age of 18 years.

Child abuse

Child abuse is any intentional harm or mistreatment of a child. It could be by a parent, caregiver, or anyone including another child. It includes:

- Physical abuse: Deliberate injury or harm (e.g. hitting, shaking, burning)
- Emotional abuse: Persistent emotional maltreatment that damages a child's self-worth or development
- Sexual abuse: Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities
- Neglect: Failing to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs
- Exploitation: refers to the act of using a child for someone else's benefit—whether financial, sexual, criminal, or personal—often through manipulation, coercion, or abuse of power. Examples include sexual exploitation, labour exploitation and child trafficking.

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful experiences occurring during childhood that may directly harm a child or affect the environment in which they live (Bellis et al 2016). ACEs can be caused by a number of factors, some examples are: abuse; domestic violence; childhood illness; alcohol or drug misuse by the child or a member of their household, the death, separation or imprisonment of a parent and homelessness.

ACEs can impact a child's brain development, behaviour, health, and learning. Individuals who have experienced multiple ACEs are more likely to have poor physical and mental health in adulthood and are also more likely to engage in health harming behaviours.

Trauma Informed Approach

Using a trauma sensitive **LENS** can help staff and volunteers to reflect and explore why an individual may be behaving in the way that they are, what their needs might be, and what support they may require.

- **Look** - at their behaviour/language/environment
- **Explore** - what may have happened and how you can help
- **Needs** – consider what their needs are
- **Support** – consider the support they may require

More information can be found at <https://www.safeguardingni.org/aces-and-trauma-informed-practice>.

Adult at risk of harm

An 'Adult at risk of harm' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) personal characteristics AND/OR
- b) life circumstances



Personal characteristics may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain.

Life circumstances may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

Adult in need of protection

An 'Adult in need of protection' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- personal characteristics AND/OR
- life circumstances AND
- who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests; AND
- where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

In order to meet the definition of an 'adult in need of protection' either (a) or (b) must be present, in addition to both elements (c), and (d). The decision as to whether the definition of an 'adult in need of protection' is met will demand the careful exercise of professional judgement applied on a case-by-case basis. This will take into account all the available evidence, concerns, the impact of harm, degree of risk and other matters relating to the individual and his or her circumstances. The seriousness and the degree of risk of harm are key to determining the most appropriate response and establishing whether the threshold for protective intervention has been met.

Adult abuse

The categories of abuse in relation to adults at risk of harm and adults in need of protection are: -

- Physical abuse
- Emotional/Psychological abuse
- Sexual Violence and abuse
- Neglect
- Exploitation
- Financial
- Institutional

Abuse can be perpetrated by an individual (often known to the victim) or it can be organisational. Abuse can be perpetrated by peers.

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AT BELFAST SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Our policy and practice are guided by five underpinning principles as outlined below.

These principles are contained within the regional adult safeguarding policy "Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership", (DOH and DOJ, 2015).

A Rights-Based Approach: To promote and respect an adult's right to be safe and secure; to freedom from harm and coercion; to equality of treatment; to the protection of the law; to privacy; to confidentiality; and freedom from discrimination.

An Empowering Approach: To empower adults to make informed choices about their lives, to maximise their opportunities to participate in wider society, to keep themselves safe and free from harm and enabled to manage their own decisions in respect of exposure to risk.



A Person-Centred Approach: To promote and facilitate full participation of adults in all decisions affecting their lives taking full account of their views, wishes and feelings and, where appropriate, the views of others who have an interest in his or her safety and well-being.

A Consent-Driven Approach: To make a presumption that the adult has the ability to give or withhold consent; to make informed choices; to help inform choice through the provision of information, and the identification of options and alternatives; to have particular regard to the needs of individuals who require support with communication, advocacy or who lack the capacity to consent; and intervening in the life of an adult against his or her wishes only in particular circumstances, for very specific purposes and always in accordance with the law.

A Collaborative Approach: To acknowledge that adult safeguarding will be most effective when it has the full support of the wider public and of safeguarding partners across the statutory, voluntary, community, independent and faith sectors working together and is delivered in a way where roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability are clearly defined and understood. Working in partnership and a person-centred approach will work hand-in-hand.

DELIVERING SAFEGUARDING

Delivering safeguarding at BST involves a multifaceted approach that includes policy development, training, and community engagement. BST will ensure that its safeguarding policy is clear, accessible, that it is communicated to staff, students and to others as appropriate. It will be reviewed to adapt to changing circumstances and legal requirements. Training staff and students in safeguarding principles and procedures is also considered essential for creating a culture of safety and respect. Additionally, BST will maintain open communication with local authorities and other partners to ensure a coordinated response to safeguarding concerns. Other mechanisms include but are not limited to:

- Robust staff recruitment procedures
- Student recruitment procedures
- Due diligence process for engaging contractors
- Support services including academic and pastoral care

BST is committed to fostering an inclusive, caring, Christian culture that promotes equality, values diversity and seeks to maintain a professional work, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all members of the BST community are respected. The BST Codes of Conduct are based upon principles that derive from the nature of BST as a Christian institution: Biblical concepts of love and respect for individuals, property, and the environment. It is expected that the behaviour of all members of the BST community will reflect these concepts and that all will live in a manner that pleases God.

SAFEGUARDING DELIVERY AREA:	
Staff and volunteer recruitment:	Robust safer recruitment procedures followed. Staff Handbook outlines policy and procedures relating to staff behaviour and discipline. BST shall not employ under 18-year-old Casual Workers or volunteers.
Risk assessments:	BST is required to create and monitor a Safeguarding Risk Assessment to ensure that any risks to safety are mitigated as far as reasonably possible. Risk assessments will be required by organisers of all BST activities, including those involving children, or adults at risk that take place both on or off BST premises.



Security and safety on site:	Health and Safety Policy Employee Handbook/Contract of Employment BST Student Handbook
Student recruitment:	All interviews of children and adults at risk will be held in accordance with BST Recruitment, Selection, Admissions policy.
Ministry placements:	The Ministry Placements Policy outlines BST's policy towards ministry placements and includes an explanation of the responsibilities of BST, the rights and responsibilities of students and what is expected from placement providers. Further information is provided in Ministry Placement Handbooks for both students and Placement Providers.
Acceptable use of ICT:	All students will be advised during orientation of BST's Acceptable Use of ICT Policy and Procedures and BST's intolerance for any misuse that could harm others. The IT Coordinator will monitor adherence to BST's Acceptable Use of ICT Policy and Procedure and therefore be alerted to any potential safeguarding concerns when they occur and report to the Safeguarding Lead.
Use of photos:	BST recognizes that photographing fellow members (students/staff) of the BST community has the potential to lead to harm. Once taken, the photograph is the property and responsibility of the photographer. Permission to take photographs or videos whilst on BST premises should be requested from management. The risk of potential harm (even inadvertently) should be considered before consent is sought for photographs to be taken or used (see Appendix 6).
Parents/visitors with children:	Staff shall ensure that any visitors accompanied by children shall be reminded that the child must remain in sight of their parent at all times during the visit. Parents are responsible for the safety of their own children at all times while on site. BST will undertake a Risk Assessment for BST organised events that include child participants.
Visitors and contractors	Visitor Policy in place - visitors and contractors must ensure they comply with relevant school policies and procedures and understand what they need to do to keep themselves and others safe.
Academic research children/young people as research subjects:	Research involving human participants must be approved by BST Education Committee, who will ensure that the provisions of this policy are adhered to. This includes research by undergraduate and post-graduate students, and staff.



Academic support and pastoral care:	Student Guide to Student Support and Pastoral Care. The Pastoral Care Worker will follow BST's Pastoral Care Policy and good practice guidelines provided by the Association of Christians in Counselling and Linked Professions.
Licensed office space/shared premises:	BST will ensure as a licensed tenant, that they will co-operate and coordinate, as required, with Stranmillis University College's to ensure the safety and security of it's community.

PROCESSES FOR CHECKING WHEN AN ACCESS NI CHECK IS REQUIRED

BST is responsible for knowing when a job or volunteering role requires an AccessNI check. There are three levels of check:

- basic (direct from Access NI)
- standard (via an umbrella body)
- enhanced (via an umbrella body)

BST can ask all job applicants to apply for a basic check during the recruitment process. Basic and Standard checks are not suitable for roles working with children or vulnerable adults.

Student ministry placements may require a satisfactory Access NI check before the placement commences. Placement policy compliance procedures provide further details.

BST will refer to its umbrella body and the AccessNI Compliance Advisory Service for further information as required regarding levels of check and the criteria that must be met for each level.

RECOGNISING SIGNS OF ABUSE

When children or adults are suffering from abuse, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance or their behaviour.

There are a wide range of indicators of abuse, the following are just a few examples:

- Unexplained or hidden injuries, lack of medical attention
- Reverting to younger behaviour, nervousness, sudden underachievement, or seeking more attention than usual
- Preoccupation with sexual matters, sexually provocative with adults, nightmares, secretive relationships with adults or children
- Looking ill cared for and unhappy, withdrawn, or aggressive, lingering injuries

REPORTING INCIDENCES AND RAISING CONCERNS

Any member of the BST community who has concerns that a child, young person or adult at risk is being or has been harmed should contact the Safeguarding Lead. They should not delay, not act alone or confront anyone concerned and under no circumstances start to investigate if sexual abuse of a child is suspected or disclosed, alleged or suspected.

All complaints, allegations or concerns will be taken seriously, and staff, volunteers and students are encouraged to report concerns at the earliest opportunity.

It is not the responsibility of individual members of staff to investigate or make judgments on suspected instances of risks of harm to the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult. That is a matter for the relevant external agencies, or, in appropriate cases, BST through the actions described in Safeguarding Procedures.

The Safeguarding Lead will take the matter forward as appropriate. If the situation requires an immediate



emergency response, then the appropriate 999 call should be made then reporting implemented.

In the case of suspected abuse of a child (despite the natural inclination to do so), it is very important to NOT discuss the situation with the child's parents at this stage. The Professionals (Social Services and/or the Police) will advise when/if it is safe to do so. Where emergency medical attention is necessary it should be sought immediately.

The Safeguarding Lead will discuss the situation on a need-to-know basis, which may include the line manager, the Principal and the Pastoral Care Worker (who may be approached to arrange support for any of those involved).

A written record of all conversations and actions should be kept. A general principle for processing information is that information is only shared with the consent of the subject of the information. In some circumstances however, it will not be appropriate to seek consent before sharing information with others and / or information can be shared where consent has been refused. The exception to this is where to do so would:

- Place the child, an adult, or others at increased risk of significant harm.
- Undermine the prevention, detection, or prosecution of a serious crime (i.e. any crime that causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a child or to an adult) including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.

Whilst BST functions as a separate entity from SUC, it must be recognised that because they share premises and there are some shared spaces e.g. car park, outside grounds etc. there may be occasions that safeguarding concerns should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead for SUC. This will only happen if deemed necessary and will strictly be on a need-to-know basis for the purposes of the safeguarding of students and/or staff.

BST strongly urges anyone who is confronted with an individual who comes to them with an accusation of sexual assault or sexual violence being committed against them to immediately contact the Safeguarding Lead. Allegations of abuse by any member of the BST community will be taken very seriously. If found guilty, this would amount to gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice (staff) or in the case of a student, termination of registration according to the terms of the 'Student Code of conduct, Student Disciplinary Policy, and Procedures' which states *"Safeguarding of Children and Adults at risk is of the utmost importance to BST. Care must be taken with regard to the presence of children on campus so as to protect their safety at all times. It is the responsibility of students to make themselves aware of the BST's Safeguarding Policy and general expectations about community living and as stated in the Student Handbook. Any concerns regarding Safeguarding should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead immediately."*

Use of staff disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of them being found guilty of such a misdemeanor. All parties involved in a complaint (including any witnesses who may be interviewed as part of any investigation) should maintain the confidentiality of the process. Failure on the part of any member of BST staff to do so will be regarded as a failure to fulfil the responsibilities of their position. All steps will be taken to maintain confidentiality as far as is consistent with progressing the complaint. Those involved in advising complainants, where possible, should seek the consent of the individual for the onward disclosure of relevant information to those with a clear need to know. Where such consent is not forthcoming, the person entrusted with the information should make it clear that, in exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to disclose the information, taking account of the duty of care that may be owed to the individual and/or others. When a criminal offence may have been committed, the relevant disciplinary procedure may not be appropriate. These cases will include, but not be limited to, serious assault or threat of serious assault. Student members can seek advice from their tutor, the Pastoral Care Worker, their Programme Leader or speak directly with the Principal and/or approach the Police directly; and staff members can speak directly with the Principal and/or approach the Police directly.

If a complainant is deemed to have known or could reasonably have been expected to know that a complaint was unfounded, the allegation of abuse may be judged vexatious or malicious, and disciplinary action may be taken against them. In the case of a student this would be dealt with by referral to the Student Code of Conduct disciplinary procedure, and staff through the Staff disciplinary procedure (Employee Handbook). No action will be taken if a complaint, which proves to be unfounded, is judged to have been made in good faith.



If a decision is taken to permanently remove an individual from regulated activity (or would have done had the employee/volunteer not left) because of harm or risk of harm to a child or adult, there is a legal requirement to refer the individual to The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) who will then consider inclusion on a Barred list. Individuals who have been convicted or cautioned for very serious offences against children or adults at risk will be automatically barred.

DATA PROTECTION

- Written records of any safeguarding concerns will be retained for as long as is necessary for the purpose for which it was obtained or as legally required or lawfully permitted
- Such written records will be held centrally and separately from a member of staff, volunteer or student's personal records
- All such records should be stored in a locked filing cabinet or password protected if stored electronically.
- All such records are kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. See the school's Data Protection Policy for details
- In line with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998, anyone for whom the College holds records is entitled to a copy of all their personal data held by Belfast School of Theology. An exception would be if the release of the information would interfere with the prevention, detection or investigation of a crime. All requests should be made through the Academic Administration Office



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This document, as well as all other policy, procedure and guidance documents will be available to all, monitored regularly, reviewed, and evaluated periodically.

Those in positions of authority, such as the Members of the Board, the Principal, the Senior Leadership Team, and the Safeguarding Lead have formal responsibilities under this Policy and are expected to familiarize themselves with this policy on appointment.

Role	Responsible for
Board	Ensure satisfactory mechanisms are in place for the discharge of safeguarding at BST. Identify a nominated safeguarding board member who also acts as a contact for escalation. Undertake relevant Safeguarding training as board members.
Principal and Senior Leadership Team	Ensure safeguarding is afforded the utmost priority at the most senior level through their links to the Board and management team. Ensure procedures are in place for managing safeguarding allegations, whistleblowing, and safe recruitment practice and notifying board. Implement Employee Disciplinary Policy or Student Code of Conduct in relation to any disciplinary procedure.
Safeguarding Lead	Undertake relevant training as required. Ensure safeguarding measures are implemented at all BST events that may involve children, young people or adults at risk. Ensure a staff structure is in place to fulfil safeguarding for the organization. Oversee associated procedures, practice and guidance to promote wellbeing and prevent abuse from happening. Engage staff and volunteers with policy and procedures across BST to act on safeguarding concerns. Ensure that time and resources are allocated for training in safeguarding for all staff and volunteers regularly. To compile and analyse records of reported concerns to determine whether a number of low-level concerns are accumulating to become more significant; and make records available for inspection. Ensure insurance requirements for safeguarding are met.
Ministry Placements Co-Ordinator	Undertake relevant safeguarding training as required. Liaise with Safeguarding Lead regarding safeguarding policy and procedures. Provide guidance and training for students on placement and liaise with placement organisations about their safeguarding procedures. Oversee and monitor the security of record keeping.



	Work together to implement safeguarding procedures in an effective and efficient manner.
Pastoral Care Worker	Work within the guidelines of BST's Pastoral Care Policy. Undertake relevant safeguarding training as required.
All staff and visitors	All staff and visitors are expected to familiarise themselves with this Policy. They also have a personal responsibility for complying with this Policy and must comply with and demonstrate active commitment to this Policy by: Reporting any suspicions of harm being done to any child, young person or adult at risk to the Safeguarding Lead.
All Staff	It is the responsibility of ALL staff working at BST to record and report abuse and incidents of concern in line with our procedures. This responsibility extends to all staff, not just those specifically working with children, young people and adults at risk. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all staff to: • Treat children and adults at risk with dignity and respect at all times. • Adopt child protection and adults at risk guidelines including the code of behaviour for staff. • Act upon any concern, no matter how small or trivial it may seem, in accordance with BST procedures. • Promote safe practice and challenge poor and unsafe behaviour. • Ensure all health and safety procedures are adhered to.



APPROVAL & REVIEW

The Safeguarding Lead will annually review this policy or more often as required.

They will seek independent guidance on the creation and ongoing maintenance of this safeguarding policy from a specialist safeguarding expert or advice agency such as thirtyone:eight ([https:// thirtyoneeight.org](https://thirtyoneeight.org); previously known as CCPAS — the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service) who will also advise on best practice according to current legislation, directives and understandings.

The overall responsibility for achieving the objectives of this policy and ensuring its compliance rests with the **Board**, who are also responsible for its final annual review and monitoring.

The **Principal** also has responsibility for overseeing any complaints brought under the terms of the policy and ensuring that decision-making complies with all relevant regulatory bodies.

POLICY COMMUNICATION

This policy is published on our website with reference to this included where relevant in Information Handbooks.

Every effort will be made to respond to any request to provide this policy in a different format.

This policy will be included in staff and student induction.

Whilst both BST and SUC are separate organisations, as BST's premises are located on SUC campus, communication regarding their safeguarding policies is required. Both BST and Stranmillis University's Safeguarding Lead should provide the other with a copy of their Safeguarding Policy and reissue this whenever it has been updated. This will ensure that BST staff will have the correct information regarding the safeguarding lead at SUC.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 SAFEGUARDING REPORTING FORM (CHILD)

Appendix 2 GUIDANCE ON HANDLING DISCLOSURE OR ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE

Appendix 3 GUIDANCE ON HANDLING DISCLOSURE OR ALLEGATION OF ABUSE OF AN ADULT AT RISK

Appendix 4 SAFEGUARDING REPORTING FORM (ADULT)

Appendix 5 SAFEGUARDING REPORTING FLOWCHART

Appendix 6 USE OF PHOTOS

Appendix 7 2024-2025 Belfast School of Theology Contacts for Safeguarding

APPENDIX 1- Safeguarding Reporting Form (CHILD)



Safeguarding Reporting Form (CHILD)

For use by staff with any safeguarding concerns and/or

Safeguarding Lead. This confidential form should be kept in a secure location.

Report Completed By:

Position:

Date:

Information about child

Name

Address:

Date of Birth

Name of Parent/carers

Parent/Carer Address

Incident date and time:

Details of Concern or allegation

Detail exactly what the child said and what you said: (Remember do not lead the child – record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary)

Action taken so far:

Safeguarding Lead informed?

Yes ☐ No ☐

External Agencies contacted



Police	Yes ☐ No ☐
Details of advice received:	
Branch Contacted:	

Name:	
Contact no:	
Social Services	Yes ☐ No ☐
Details of advice received:	
Branch Contacted:	
Name:	
Contact no:	
Other Agencies as advised by above	Yes ☐ No ☐
Details of advice received:	
Branch Contacted:	
Name:	
Contact no:	

Signature:

Date:

Remember to maintain confidentiality on a need-to-know basis – only if it will protect the child. Do not discuss the incident with anyone other than those who need to know.



APPENDIX 2 - GUIDANCE ON HANDLING DISCLOSURE OR ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE

The following is a summary for reference only:

- Be careful not to promise anything, e.g. that you will not tell anyone else.
- Look at the person directly as you listen
- Listen with care, and treat with respect what is being said
- Be aware that they may have been threatened
- Do not press for information
- Reassure the person that they are right to tell and that you believe them
- Let them know what you are going to do next
- As soon as possible, make notes of exactly what has been said and the date and time

WHAT TO DO:

- Contact the school's Safeguarding Lead (SL) without delay.
- Complete the Safeguarding Reporting Form as soon as possible (Appendix 1).
- Where emergency medical attention is necessary it should be sought immediately. The SL will contact the Gateway Team at the HSC Trust. The parents or responsible person should not be informed.
- The SL will follow advice from the Gateway Team. This might mean a formal referral is made.

DO NOT:

- Speak to the parents/carer about any suspicions, disclosures, or allegations.
- Under no circumstances attempt to carry out any investigation into the allegation.
- It is the responsibility of the person reporting an allegation to ensure that action is taken, and procedures followed.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

Professional involvement will usually follow this course: a strategy discussion involving social services, police child protection team, other significant professionals and the person suspecting abuse or to whom the child had talked.

A decision will be taken as to whether an investigation is warranted, if so this will be planned.

The investigation may include: An informal talk with the child/ A formal police interview (with / without social services)/ A video recorded interview following disclosure/ Medical examination/ Preliminary family assessment.

If there is sufficient concern a child protection conference will be held to decide the best course of action to protect the child and help the family. There may be criminal prosecution of the abuser.



Appendix 3 - GUIDANCE ON HANDLING DISCLOSURE OR ALLEGATION OF ABUSE OF AN ADULT AT RISK

When an alert is raised in relation to an adult safeguarding concern or disclosure, the Safeguarding Lead or Designated Trustee Safeguarding Lead will ensure the following actions occur:

- Consider whether the concern is a safeguarding issue or not. This may involve some 'checking out' of information provided whilst being careful not to stray into the realm of investigation
- Where immediate danger exists or the situation warrants immediate action, ensure any medical assistance has been sought and refer to the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service or PSNI
- Ensure that any actions take account of the adult's wishes

Where it has been deemed that it is not a safeguarding issue, other alternative responses should be considered such as monitoring, support or advice to staff and volunteers.

A record should be made of the concern and the details kept on file, including any action taken; the reasons for not referring; and the situation monitored on an ongoing basis.

If it is decided that it is a safeguarding issue, the situation will be reported to the HSC Key Worker where known. If unaware of HSC Key Worker contact details, a referral will be made to the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service. The HSC Trust will then conduct a risk assessment and decide what response is appropriate.

If a crime is suspected or alleged, contact the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service directly.

Ensure accurate and timely records and any adult safeguarding forms required have been completed. Where there is any doubt or uncertainty about whether there is a safeguarding issue this should be discussed with the HSC Key Worker (if known) or HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service. If in doubt, the ASC or appointed person should contact the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service for advice and guidance.

If it is determined that the concerns do not meet the definition of an adult at risk or an adult in need of protection, the concerns raised must be recorded; including any action taken; and the reasons for not referring to the HSC Trust.



APPENDIX 4 - SAFEGUARDING REPORTING FORM (ADULT)

SAFEGUARDING REPORTING FORM (ADULT)	
Name of Adult	
Age/Date of Birth	
Gender	
Home Address	
Please Complete those sections that are relevant	
Disclosure by Adult at risk	
When was the disclosure made (Date/time)	
Who did the adult make the disclosure to?	
What did the adult say?	
2 Indicators	
Describe any signs or indicators of abuse with times and dates	
Has the adult alleged that any particular person is the abuser – if so record details)	
3 Concerns expressed by another person about an adult at risk	
Record the concerns that were passed to you (with dates and times) and if possible ask the person who expressed the concerns to confirm that the details as written are correct	
Agreed by (NAME, dated)	
4 Details of any immediate action taken, e.g. first aid, etc	
5 Has the adult expressed any reservations about onward referral?	
Please note concerns about you talking to your Line Manager/Adult Safeguarding	



APPENDIX 5 - SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

1. Staff, volunteer or student has a concern about a child or adult.
2. Report to the Safeguarding Lead or Designated Board Member without delay. If a child or adult is in immediate danger, contact emergency services.
3. A Safeguarding Reporting Form should be completed by the person who first raised the concern (see Appendix 1 or 4).
4. The Designated Board Member or Safeguarding Lead will seek advice from the HSC.
5. If it is a serious concern, the Safeguarding Lead or Designated Board Member will make a referral to Gateway Team and follow their guidance. A possible referral to DBS may also take place. Written records of all actions taken will be stored securely.
6. If it isn't serious, the Safeguarding Lead or Designated Board Member will monitor the situation.



Staff or student has concern about a child or adult.



Report to either Safeguarding Lead or Designated Trustee Safeguarding Lead without delay.
If a child or adult is in immediate danger, contact emergency services on 999.



A Safeguarding Reporting Form should be completed by the person who first raised the concern (see Appendix 1 or 4).



The SL or DTSL will seek advice from the HSC Trust Gateway Service.



Is this a serious concern?

YES



The SL or DTSL will make a referral to the Gateway Team.
Follow guidance from Gateway Team.
Possible referral to the DBS.
Written records of all actions should be taken and stored confidentially.
Principal and/or others will be informed on a need-to-know basis.

NO



The SL or DTSL will monitor the situation.
Identify possible training needs.
Written records of all actions should be taken and stored confidentially.



APPENDIX 6 - USE OF PHOTOS

Safeguarding must be considered when photos are taken for BST publicity and when handling and sharing newsletters from alumni. BST has identified specific risks and protocols must be followed to mitigate them.

Photographing children can lead to harm for the following reasons:

- Children may be identifiable when a photograph is shared with personal information.
- There can be direct and indirect risks to children and young people when photographs are shared on websites and in publications with personal information.
- Innocent images of children can be used by others for unlawful reasons.
- Adaptation or copying of images can also lead to inappropriate use.

It is the policy of BST not to take or use images of anyone under the age of 18 for any reason. The only exception is applicants who are under 18 who must supply their passport photo for the purposes of applying to BST.

Photographing children is NOT advised and students are advised not to take photographs of children during placement.

Photographing students and most especially posting photos on social media may cause harm to a student in the future if they later work in a sensitive country. The Placement Handbook reminds placements of this risk, but it is also the responsibility of such students to highlight this risk to their placement supervisor.

Protocols regarding displaying staff and/or student photos are:

- Staff and Students who may work in sensitive countries are asked to inform management that their image must be used with caution.
- Consent for use of the photos containing a student, staff member or volunteer is sought at the start of their time at BST as part of the staff induction or student registration.
- For any other individuals in photographs eg: visiting speakers or guests at a conference, BST reserves the right to use their image, as they are at a public campus, unless they notify management that they don't want their image to be used.
- BST keeps photos in storage for historical archive purposes but will only use those images publicly while that person is recently connected to BST (usually one year). It should be noted that social media posts are available forever.



APPENDIX 7 - Contacts for Safeguarding

Safeguarding Lead: Jill Thorpe

Designated Trustee Safeguarding Lead: Sara Graham

If you have a concern, you should not delay. If Belfast School of Theology staff are not available, please contact the following:



thirtyone:eight

Creating safer places. Together.

- If you're concerned about a person or situation
- You work with children or adults and need safeguarding advice
- You're a safeguarding lead or professional and need information or support

Whatever your concern - recent or non-recent, if it relates to safeguarding or even if you're not sure - call us Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm, on 0303 003 1111.

In an emergency, especially if someone is in immediate danger of harm, you should always call 999 straight away and ask for the police.



Reporting Concerns: [Reporting Concerns \(proceduresonline.com\)](http://proceduresonline.com)

Social Services: Normal Working Hours

(Mon-Fri: 9.00am-5.00pm, excluding Bank Holidays and weekends)

If you are concerned about the welfare of a child or young person you can contact the relevant Health and Social Care Trust Children's Services Gateway Single Point of Entry Team (Mon-Fri: 9.00am-5.00pm) during normal working hours.

Contact details are as follows:

Belfast HSC Trust

Tel: 028 9050 7000;

South Eastern HSC Trust

Tel: 0300 1000 300;

Northern HSC Trust

Tel: 0300 1234 333;

Southern HSC Trust

Tel: 0800 7837 745 / Freephone: 028 3741 5285;

Western HSC Trust

Tel: 028 7131 4090.

More information on how to make a referral can be found in the [Referrals Procedure](#).

Outside normal working hours and in an emergency (Friday 5.00pm – Monday 9.00am, including Bank holidays):

Regional Emergency Social Work Service Tel:

028 9504 9999

E-mail:

resws1@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Police Service of Northern Ireland

(PSNI)

If you, or someone you know, has been the victim of abuse, or if you are the parent of a child this has happened to:

Report the matter directly to the police service the Central Referral Unit on 101, the non-emergency number, and you will be put in contact with a specially trained police officer who will speak to you confidentially.

Opening times are:

Monday to Friday (8.00am – 5.00pm);

Saturday and Sunday (9.00am – 5.00pm).

IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION DIAL THE POLICE EMERGENCY NUMBER 999.

NSPCC

You can call 0808 800 5000 or e-mail help@nspcc.org.uk to report concerns about a child/young person.



Children/young people can contact ChildLine for advice on 0800 1111 or e-mail them by visiting www.childline.org.uk.

Lifeline

If you, or someone you know, is in distress or despair, call Lifeline on 0808 808 8000. This is a confidential service, where trained counsellors will listen and help immediately on the phone and follow-up with other support if necessary. The helpline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also access the Lifeline website at www.lifelinehelpline.info.