



Safeguarding Policy

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Information Governance			
Internal procedures in appendices are available to staff and volunteers on the internal drive and to commissioners on request.			

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SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS (& STANDARDS FOR SERVICE DELIVERY)

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Part 1: Introduction

Introduction and legislation

The Breastfeeding Network (BfN) has a statutory duty to ensure that it makes arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people that reflect the needs of the children we may come into contact with; and to protect vulnerable adults from abuse or the risk of abuse.

The UK's 4 nations – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – have their own child protection system and laws to help protect children from abuse and neglect. Each nation has a framework of legislation, guidance and practice to identify children who are at risk of harm, and take action to protect those children and prevent further abuse occurring.

Our policy takes account of a number of different legislation, a number of key policies and legislation are listed in appendix 1, for up to date legislation, policy and guidance, for each of the 4 nations go to:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/>

Scope of the Document

This safeguarding policy has two functions: it details the roles and responsibilities of BfN volunteers and employees; whilst at the same time provides clear service standards.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the Breastfeeding Network (BfN) does not put a service user or their child inadvertently at risk; that rigorous systems are in place to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children, to protect vulnerable adults from abuse, or the risk of abuse, and to support volunteers and staff in fulfilling their obligations.

This document will be reviewed, every year or in line with changing national and local guidance.

Principles

In developing this policy;

BfN recognises that we all have a responsibility to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and need to ensure effective joint working across the organisation as a whole and at a local level, between BfN (volunteers and staff) and the local agencies and professionals. Our different roles and expertise are required to protect vulnerable groups in society from harm.

In order to achieve effective joint working there must be constructive relationships at all levels. At BfN this is promoted and supported by:

- **The commitment of all volunteers, staff and directors to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.** -Safeguarding training (safeguarding children online course provided free by BfN) is mandatory for BfN registration required every 3 years. Local projects are encouraged to seek local safeguarding training courses. (Mandatory annual safeguarding supervision sessions provides annual training, see below).
- **Volunteer and staff training and continued professional development, so that all have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and are able to undertake these in an effective manner. This includes being able to recognise when a child or vulnerable adult requires safeguarding and knowing what to do in response to concerns.**
Safeguarding issues are addressed as part of supervision sessions (a requirement for ongoing registration – BfN deliver a standard safeguarding (children and adults) supervision session that can be used as ongoing CPD between online/local safeguarding course dates)
- Safe working practices including recruitment and vetting procedures.
- **Service developments that take account of the need to safeguard all service users and their children, and is informed, where appropriate, by the views of volunteers and staff.**
There is a central safeguarding form that can be used across the organisation (including by NBH/Social Media and DIBM Service volunteers) to report concerns that contributes to a central database to inform safeguarding developments– see appendix 4 Reporting a concern form and downloadable here: <https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/governance/>
- **References are collected for both staff and volunteers before they can be registered**
- **Effective interagency working, including effective information sharing – in line with BfN's IG Policy:** https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/BfN-Information-Governance-Policy_2022.pdf
- Local Children's Safeguarding teams contact details and processes are known locally to project areas. Up to date information is available on the council websites. Clear lines of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding.

See section 4.0 for BfN dedicated safeguarding roles and contact details

Breaches of Policy

This Safeguarding policy is mandatory. Where it is not possible to comply with the policy or there is a need to depart from it, this must be notified to a BfN Safeguarding role without delay, so that the level of risk can be assessed and an action plan can be formulated (see section 2.1 for contact details).

When working within a commissioned service the host commissioner will notify us of any non-compliance with the standards contained in this policy, including action taken where there has been a significant breach.

Part 2. BfN Safeguarding training and supervision

Training

Children

The online Safeguarding Course, available through our online training platform, is suitable for all volunteers/staff and will adequately train you in safeguarding and child protection issues.

Most local Safeguarding Boards provide access to free safeguarding training for those in the charity sector. Please always look to see if free training is available in your area before accessing the BfN's online training course for which you will be registered. If you do need to access the online course your Supervisor or volunteer/project coordinator will request this through the BfN Central Team centralsupport@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk who will provide you with log in details.

- All BfN registered volunteers and staff will receive an induction to the BfN safeguarding policy and the online training course / local safeguarding training courses in place.
- All volunteers and staff will take part in Safeguarding Training.
- Relevant training and support will be provided on an ongoing basis via the annual Safeguarding supervision session and will cover information about their role, local referral processes and safeguarding contacts, plus opportunities for practising skills needed for the work.
- Safeguarding training is undertaken at regular intervals (annually via supervision sessions plus training course 3 yearly).
- Safeguarding training will be checked annually at the point of BfN registration renewal. If you complete your training locally rather than on the BfN training site please save a copy of the certificate to show your Supervisor.

Adults

The BfN do not currently request mandatory training for safeguarding vulnerable adults however we do recommend the free online course available on our training site or external courses listed on the volunteer passport – details in Appendix 3.

NBH@Night staff make safeguarding assessments and may be required to respond to crisis calls in the middle of the night when many safeguarding professionals are not working. For this reason, all NBH@Night staff must complete the online course available which includes safeguarding adults.

Supervision

- All BfN registered volunteers and staff will have a designated Supervisor who will provide regular feedback and support.
- All BfN registered volunteers will have regular opportunities to discuss their performance, skills, motivation and expectations with their Supervisor, line managers, or volunteer coordinator where these are in position.

- Dedicated supervision session will be delivered on an annual basis, covering adult and child safeguarding plus local referral processes and contacts.
- BfN will ensure that all staff and BfN registered volunteers involved in recruitment, training and supervision, are aware of this policy and have received appropriate training and support to ensure its full implementation.
- All BfN registered volunteers and staff who volunteer in a face to face setting (England and Wales) will have appropriate enhanced DBS disclosure repeated at three yearly intervals. All BfN registered volunteers (Scotland) will join the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme which is designed to be updated following an initial disclosure and therefore is not repeated.

Part 3. Safeguarding definitions and descriptions

Safeguarding children

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Safeguarding is defined in [Working together to safeguard children](#) as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

(The Charity commissioner, England and Wales 2014)

[National guidance for child protection in Scotland 2021](#) defines 'Child protection' as:

- Protecting a child from child abuse or neglect. Abuse or neglect need not have taken place; it is sufficient for a risk assessment to have identified a *likelihood* or *risk* of significant harm from abuse or neglect.

Definition of a child in child protection guidance?

England, Wales and Northern Ireland state a child is anyone who is under the age of 18. In Scotland a child legally becomes an adult when they turn 16, but statutory guidance which supports the Children and Young People Act 2014, includes all children and young people up to the age of 18. Where concerns are raised about a 16 or 17 year old, agencies will need to consider which legislation or guidance is appropriate to follow.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/children-the-law/>

Vulnerable Groups

Some especially vulnerable young people are entitled to services beyond the age of 18. Local authorities in England and Wales must keep in touch with care leavers until they are at least 21. They should also provide assistance with education, employment and training. Local authorities in Northern Ireland also have this same duty.

Vulnerable adults

England and Wales:

As described within the Departments of Health's [No secrets](#): Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse states that a vulnerable adult is a person who is aged 18 years or over;

'who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'.

Scotland: The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 defines:

'Adults at risk' might include people over 16 who:

- Find it difficult to keep themselves or their property (their home, the things they own) safe;
- Might be harmed by other people;
- Might be more vulnerable because of a disability, illness or mental disorder (this could mean people with mental health problems, people with dementia, people with learning disabilities).

You can find details of NICE guidance and pathways for different vulnerable groups here:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/population-groups/vulnerable-groups/products?Status=Published>

Safeguarding concerns

Child Abuse and Neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Domestic violence

Definition: Domestic abuse is any incident or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender and sexuality. It also includes **Forced Marriage, Honour-Based Abuse** and **Female Genital Mutilation**.

Impact on Children and Young People: Prolonged and/or regular exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious impact on a child's development and emotional wellbeing, despite the best efforts of the victim's parent to protect the child.

Domestic Abuse is a child protection issue. In relation to the impact of domestic abuse on children, the amendment made in section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 to the Children Act 1989 clarifies the meaning of "harm" in the Children Act, to make explicit that "harm" will include, for example, "impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another." This is now also specifically included in the definition of **Emotional Abuse**.

Children missing education

If you discover a child within a family you are supporting is not receiving any form of education you should follow normal safeguarding procedures below.

Abuse of Vulnerable adults

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by other person or persons. Abuse may consist of single or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Part 4: BfN Safeguarding roles and responsibilities

LEAD DIRECTOR – Ernestine Gheyoh Ndzi– ceo@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

- Advisory position to give guidance to staff team when required.

SAFEGUARDING LEADS – PROGRAMME MANAGERS - Anthea Tennant-Eyles, Nina White and Sarah Edwards, Eleanor Johnson - safeguarding@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

- Ensures BfN's contribution to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is carried out effectively across the organisation.
- Ensures safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is integral to governance and audit arrangements.
- Ensures all BfN policies and procedures for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults are in line with national and local standards and procedures, and are easily accessible for volunteers & staff throughout the organisation.
- Ensures BfN monitors its service standards, providing assurance that safeguarding standards are met.
- Ensures that appropriate policies and procedures are in place to make sure all volunteers and staff in contact with children and vulnerable adults in the course of their normal duties are trained and competent to be alert to the potential indicators of abuse or neglect for children and vulnerable adults, know how to act on those concerns in line with local guidance.
- Ensures the local project lead or Supervisor for safeguarding in an area develops links with and co-operates with the Local Safeguarding teams for children and adults. These include Safeguarding

Partners team for children that replace local safeguarding children boards (LSCBs), Local Safeguarding Adult Board (LAB), Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) and equivalent bodies in Scotland

- Ensure BfN has management and accountability structures that deliver safe and effective services in accordance with statutory, national and local guidance for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
- Ensure BfN will include its commitment to safeguarding within all service contracts and will include reference to the standards BfN expect to provide for volunteers and staff regarding safeguarding children and vulnerable adults (see [Appendix 2 for BfN Safeguarding qualification levels](#)).
- Ensure safeguarding responsibilities are reflected in all job descriptions and the skills framework relevant to the job role.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER – Catherine Hine
ceo@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

- Advisory position to give support to Safeguarding Leads when required.
- Is made aware of all issues logged by the SG Leads immediately so can escalate and guide where necessary.
- Reports to the Board on safeguarding logs/issues throughout the year via reports from the Safeguarding Leads.
- Ensure BfN will include its commitment to safeguarding within all service contracts when reviewing and signing.
- Ensures BfN monitors its service standards through work with the central management team.
<https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/governance/>
- Ensures Internal Reviews are carried out and recommendations implemented by Safeguarding Leads

CENTRAL SUPPORT ADMINISTRATOR – Marion McDonald
centralsupport@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

- Provides access to staff and volunteers for the online safeguarding course – see Appendix 2 BfN Safeguarding Qualification Requirements.
- Ensures references are verified for all trainees.
- Ensures that no BfN trainee can register as a BfN volunteer until their appropriate DBS/PVG disclosure has been cleared.
- Ensures that all Registered Volunteers and staff have a DBS/PVG checks repeated at three yearly intervals.

CENTRAL TEAM

recruitment@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

- Ensure recruitment of staff and volunteers working with children and or vulnerable adults, includes references that are always verified. For staff a full employment history is always available with satisfactory explanations for any gaps in employment history, that qualifications are checked and that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS – England and Wales) and Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG in Scotland) are undertaken (when available) in line with national and local guidance.
- Provide guidance to ensure all BfN Registered Volunteers and Staff receive induction training, which gives an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services structure and policies.

ON-CALL SAFEGUARDING MANAGERS:

To provide focused support to Night Helpline Team members in the following situations:

- Support NBH@ Night staff in the consistent application of agreed safeguarding protocols for NBH services

SERVICE SAFEGUARDING LEAD – Service Manager, Supervisor or NBH Manager/ NBH@Night Helpline Manager.

- Ensures induction training and compliance with local safeguarding policies
- Aware of local procedures and contacts with Local Safeguarding Children Partnership, and Local Safeguarding Adult Board (LAB), Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) and equivalent bodies in Scotland (where relevant)
- Checks volunteer or staff's certificate (paper or digital) to confirm safeguarding training has been completed locally if not through the BfN training website.

Individual volunteers and staff

- Maintain minimum requirement of safeguarding training for registration with BfN
- Report any safeguarding concerns that arise in accordance with this policy – see part 5 below
- Attend regular updates to maintain skills and be familiar with procedures aimed at safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
- Keep a record of safeguarding training dates and save the certificate of completion (digital or paper) to show your Supervisor or local Service Coordinator.

- To be alert to the potential indicators of abuse or neglect for children and vulnerable adults and know how to act on those concerns in line with local guidance.
- Be aware of the increased risk of domestic abuse in pregnancy, and the relation to child protection for children under the age of two.
- Understand the principles of confidentiality and information sharing in line with local and government guidance.
- All contribute, when requested to do so, to their local multi-agency meetings established to safeguard and protect children and vulnerable adults.

Part 5. What to do when there is concern about a child or vulnerable adult

If you are concerned about the welfare or safety of a child or vulnerable adult always:

- Seek appropriate advice and support without delay
- Discuss concerns with your Supervisor, line manager, project coordinator, local named safeguarding person, where these are in position, and follow local safeguarding procedures.

If you are unable to discuss your concerns locally, and you think the concern is urgent and someone is in immediate danger, do not delay – call 999, the NSPCC

0808 800 5000, or your local safeguarding board .

NSPCC - Helpline (24 hours a day 365 days a year)

Safeguarding children partnership team/Safeguarding adults Boards/MASH - You should find the contact details on your local authority/council website by searching for safeguarding or child protection

- **Complete a BfN reporting a concern form** (See Appendix 4 an editable version can be downloaded direct from our website <https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/governance/>)

This form is in place to support you in following the procedures in line with this policy. It is available in Word format on the BfN website under the governance section or you can ask your local project lead, Supervisor or one of the Programme Managers to help you access this. If you have a safeguarding concern, however small, please complete this form as it is crucial to record discussions every step along the way. In most cases it would be appropriate to speak to your local project lead, Supervisor or Programme Manager before you complete the form, but do not let this delay you completing the form and sharing your concerns. Send the completed form to safeguarding@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk. The form may be used to share information with other internal and external partners depending on the concern that is being raised. While it is vital that concerns are reported, any written or electronic information relating to the case should be protected as per the BfN IG Policy

[https://breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp-](https://breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/pdfs/BfN%20Information%20Governance%20Policy_2022_FINAL.pdf)

[content/pdfs/BfN%20Information%20Governance%20Policy_2022_FINAL.pdf](https://breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/pdfs/BfN%20Information%20Governance%20Policy_2022_FINAL.pdf) If you receive more

information about the same scenario please update the form, including signing and dating the form again and then email it to safeguarding@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk. The form is also used internally as a record to help inform improvements in safeguarding training and developments across the charity. The Safeguarding Leads conduct an internal review of issues to ensure standards are maintained, lessons are learned and training remains relevant and report annually to the Board. An internal review may also be carried out if there are any concerns about a specific case.

NB. Please note, for monitoring purposes, BfN are requesting that **all** enquiries relating to illegal drugs are reported using a Reporting a Concern form and sending to safeguarding@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk This may be especially pertinent to the DIBM Service Volunteers – see Part 6 below.

Never:

- Do nothing.
- Assume that someone else or another agency or professional will act or is acting.
- Fail to discuss your concerns with appropriate safeguarding leads (whether within BfN or in a local authority area).
- Attempt to resolve the matter by getting involved personally - always report it instead.

In no circumstances should staff and volunteers of BfN seek to diagnose or offer information on health treatments and medication, unless they are authorised and insured to do so as part of the Drugs in Breast Milk Information Service (DIBM). BfN staff and volunteers should always refer to the Drugs in Breast Milk information Service (during day time hours), the DIBM factsheets on the BfN website and for timely medication and treatment consultation, NHS 111 service.

Please raise any safeguarding concerns or worries while they are still just a concern –

- Keep it in perspective – there may be an innocent explanation.
- Stay calm – you’re doing the right thing.
- If for whatever reason you are worried about raising it with your Supervisor, line manager or volunteer coordinator where these are in position, you can also report concerns directly to the local Safeguarding Childrens Partnership team/Safeguarding Adults Board where a Safeguarding concern arises in a particular locality. This also applies if you feel your concerns have not been dealt with appropriately within BfN or by your health professional contact.

The NSPCC offer advice, support and guidance to service managers for any concerns. For NBH@Night, the On-call Safeguarding Managers are available every night to offer support and guidance, particularly on

Red and Amber situations. Please discuss concerns with your Supervisor, line manager or volunteer coordinator where these are in position and **complete a BfN reporting a concern form and send to safeguarding@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk** where it will be added to a central log to inform improvements in safeguarding policy and procedures.

Part 6. Enquiries relating to illegal drugs - BfN guidance for volunteers

We support all families to make informed decisions about use of medication when breastfeeding.

This includes breastfeeding mothers who have been exposed to illicit or illegal substances, whether by choice or unintentionally.

This guidance aims to help volunteers deal with these kinds of enquiries. It includes information taken from the BfN website around breastfeeding and medication and BfN Safeguarding Policy.

Firstly, respond as you would with any supporting situation:

- Listen, be non-judgmental in your response, show acceptance of the situation (not agreeing, disagreeing or condoning) and reflect back the mother's/caller's concerns. Stick to facts and evidence based information.
- if you have received information that a child has been exposed to a harmful substance, the caller should be advised to seek medical attention for the child
- Follow usual practice around having concerns about the health of a baby and strongly urge baby receives immediate medical advice – see box below.
- Explore the situation asking open questions – how is she feeling about the guidance below? has this happened before? Is this a one-off? How will she feed baby? If appropriate, discuss options with the mother about expressing to maintain supply and for her own comfort (see information below).
- Through exploring the mothers story, you may decide this is a safeguarding concern and it is appropriate to share this information in line with BfN safeguarding policy. The BfN reporting a concern form will take you through this process

Current guidance on the BfN Breastfeeding and Medication FAQs webpage states:

Does it matter if I use recreational drugs whilst I am breastfeeding?

You should not use any recreational drugs when you are breastfeeding. Cocaine is particularly toxic and it is imperative that you don't breastfeed for 48-72 hours. Prescribed Methadone appears to be safe. It is vital that you do not use any street drugs. If you have taken street drugs or plan to do so, please contact the Drugs in Breastmilk service for further information on how best to continue breastfeeding whilst keeping your baby safe.

<https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/detailed-information/drugs-in-breastmilk/drugs-faqs/>

<https://breastfeeding-and-medication.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/cocaine-and-breastfeeding-2.pdf>

DIBM notice:

We support all families to make informed decisions about use of medication when breastfeeding. This includes breastfeeding mothers who have been exposed to illicit or illegal substances, whether by choice or unintentionally. Cocaine is something we get asked about occasionally. We recommend not breastfeeding for 72 hours after cocaine use; pumping and dumping will help to maintain milk supply during that time. Cocaine metabolites can appear in the urine of a breastfed baby for several days after maternal cocaine use, which may be harmful as well as having potential legal implications. There is also the possibility of other harmful contaminants in street drugs. Parents are often understandably very cautious when they contact us for information. While we cannot condone the use of illegal substances, please be reassured that our priority is to help you to keep your baby safe. We are here to provide information on a non-judgmental basis, and all enquiries are confidential. However, safeguarding is an essential component of our work, and if we are informed that a baby has been exposed to a harmful substance, we are duty bound to pass on our concerns to the appropriate authority. If you need further support or information, please contact The Breastfeeding Network Drugs in Breastmilk information service .

Next steps:

- Once the contact has ended, please seek supervision for yourself.
- Remember if you have received information that a child has been exposed to a harmful substance, the caller should be advised to seek medical attention for the child
- For monitoring purposes, BfN ask that all enquiries relating to illicit drugs or taking too much of any medicine are reported to BfN using a Reporting a Concern form via safeguarding@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk.

Life-threatening calls on the Breastfeeding Helplines

There is a specific document addressing Life-threatening calls on the National Breastfeeding Helpline, see Appendix 5. This document outlines the process for a volunteer on NBH or BFN helplines who receives a call that indicates a 'life threatening' event - where the caller's phone number needs to be flagged urgently

Life threatening events may include:

- Situations where a caller says they are at active risk of taking their own life.
- Situations where a caller says they are in immediate serious danger from a partner or someone else.
- Situations where there is an immediate danger that the caller may seriously harm their baby or someone else.

Life threatening events are not:

- If a caller is being abusive or threatening (there is a separate procedure detailed at the bottom of this document for identifying these callers)
- If you have concerns about the health of a baby referred to in a call - e.g. the baby needs to go to hospital – follow normal procedures (e.g. urge parents to seek medical help and seek supervision for yourself).

Remember these situations are extremely rare – so please don't panic about this – these instructions are here just in case. (see Appendix 6 for full guidance)

If anything distressing ever happens on a helpline call, or if you want to talk through anything at all, please contact your Helpline Volunteer Co-ordinator /Supervisor/ABM BFCC.

No helpline volunteer should ever feel that they have to cope with anything on their own.

Part 7 - What happens when you report a concern with the LSCB/LAB?

Child Protection Committees (Scotland) and Local Safeguarding Children Boards (England and Wales) exist across local regional areas and have responsibility for ensuring there are effective inter-agency procedures in place for dealing with allegations against people who work with or on behalf of children and for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of those procedures. In some communities BfN will be a member organisation of the local Safeguarding Board.

You can find up-to-date information and procedures to the referral process for each UK country on the NSPCC website here:

England

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/england#heading-top>

Click the 'referrals and investigations' tab to find what happens once a report has been made

Scotland

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/scotland/>

Click the 'referrals and investigations' tabs to find what happens once a report has been made

Wales

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/wales>

Click the 'referrals and investigations' tab to find what happens once a report has been made

Northern Ireland

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/northern-ireland/>

Click the 'referrals and investigations' tab to find what happens once a report has been made

Whistleblowing

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line is for anyone with child protection concerns in the workplace. The helpline provides support and advice to those who feel unable to get a child protection issue addressed by their employer. It can be contacted anonymously on 0800 028 0285.

Part 8. Allegations against BfN Registered Volunteers and staff

All allegations of abuse made against a BfN registered volunteer or employee and any serious untoward incident against a child or vulnerable adult are to be notified to the Local BfN safeguarding lead (project coordinator) and BfN safeguarding leads on safeguarding@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk. BfN Directors will also be notified accordingly.

Support for an Individual

BfN has a duty of care to volunteers and staff and should act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations and disciplinary process. Support to the individual is key to fulfilling this duty.

Individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action unless there is an objection by Children's Social Care or the Police. They should be advised to contact their trade union representative, if they have one, and given information on how to access welfare counselling or medical advice where this is provided by the employer.

Particular care needs to be taken when employees are suspended to ensure that they are kept informed of both the progress of their case and in developments occurring in the workplace. Social contact with colleagues and friends should not be precluded except where it is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of evidence.

When an employee returns to work following a suspension, or at the conclusion of a case, planned arrangements should be made to facilitate their reintegration. This may involve informal supervision, guidance, support, reassurance and help to rebuild confidence in working with children and young people.

Learning the Lessons

At the conclusion of a case in which an allegation is substantiated BfN will review the circumstances of the case to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the organisation's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future. This should include issues arising from any decision to suspend a volunteer or member of staff, the duration of the suspension and whether or not suspension was justified.

The following link has informed this policies detail on supporting the individual and learning the lessons:

http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_allegations.html#sup_indiv

Part 9. Information Sharing

This guidance is about sharing information for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Sharing of information amongst professionals working with children and their families is essential. In many cases it is only when information from a range of sources is put together that a child can be seen to be in need or at risk of **significant harm**.

It is important that you:

- Understand what information is and is not confidential, and the need in some circumstances to make a judgment about whether confidential information can be shared, in the public interest, without consent.
- Understand what to do when you have reasonable cause to believe that a child or adult may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering, significant harm. Be clear of the circumstances in which information can be shared where you judge that a child is at risk of significant harm and know you will be supported in working through these issues.
- Are aware that problems faced by those with responsibilities as parents are often likely to affect children and other family members. However, this information is not always shared and opportunities to put preventative support in place for the children and the family are missed. Where an adult receiving services is a parent or carer, sharing information with colleagues in Children's Social Care could ensure that any additional support required for their children can be provided early.
- Are aware that where a professional has concerns that a child may be at risk of Significant Harm, it may be possible to justify sharing information without consent.

This is a complex area and you should seek advice if you are unsure from your line manager and/or BfN safeguarding leads. Central support will be available from BfN's Information Governance Lead and HR to support you through sharing of confidential information to other agencies.

Confidential information is:

- Personal information of a private or sensitive nature; and
- Information that is not already lawfully in the public domain or readily available from another public source; and
- Information that has been shared in circumstances where the person giving information could reasonably expect that it would not be shared with others.
- Personal data only includes information relating to natural persons who:
 - can be identified or who are identifiable, directly from the information in question; or
 - who can be indirectly identified from that information in combination with other information.
- Personal data may also include special categories of personal data or criminal conviction and offences data. These are considered to be more sensitive and you may only process them in more limited circumstances.

You should work within BfN's arrangements for recording and protecting information and within any local information sharing protocols in place.

Caldicott Guardian

Each organisation has a Caldicott Guardian. Ernestine Gheyoh Ndzi is the BfN Caldicott Guardian. This role is not there to prevent information sharing between health and social care organisations, but is there to make sure that this is done in a way which safeguards people's rights to privacy and confidentiality, and in accordance with data protection principles.

For further details see BfN's Information Governance Policy.

https://breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/pdfs/BfN%20Information%20Governance%20Policy_2022_FINAL.pdf