



Bromley House Library Child Safeguarding Policy

Last revision date: March 2024

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of Bromley House Library in working together with other professionals and agencies in promoting the welfare of children and safeguarding them from abuse and neglect.

Bromley House Library does not as such offer caring services and its membership is not open to those under the age of 18. Members who bring under 18 year olds into the Library are responsible for such children and should not leave them unattended while in the Library.

It is a practice of the Library to allow the members' children over the age of 16 to use the Library on the introduction of their parent.

However the Library is committed to ensuring that anyone visiting the Library is welcomed and not open to be abused. To this end the Library has formally stated its child safeguarding policies in this document.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers (including trustees) of Bromley House Library

3. Definitions

Anyone under the age of 18 years should be considered as a child (Child Matters – Working Together to safeguard children 2006).

4. Policy statement

Bromley House Library believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people within the Library for whatever purpose, by a commitment to practice which protects them.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount

- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The purpose of the policy:

- To provide protection for children and young people who visit the Library, including the children of adult members or users.
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child safeguarding procedures and reviewing these regularly
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers, including requiring completed Parental Consent forms for 16-18 year olds to be in the library without a parent or guardian.
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

5. Procedure

If a staff member or volunteer has concerns about a child's general welfare, or suspect that abuse (physical, sexual, emotional or neglect) is taking place, they should contact the designated safeguarding officer – the Library Director - who will contact the Children's Duty Team to discuss the concerns and to decide a course of action. If the designated person is not available, Contact the Children's Duty Team for advice, or the local police station and let the Designated Safeguarding Lead know what you have done and complete an incident report. Always follow this procedure if you are worried or concerned about a child.

If a child discloses that they are or have been abused:

- Take the child seriously and tell them so.
- Allow the child to say what has happened to him or her, but do not ask leading questions – remember that it is not your role to investigate.

- Make a note of what the child says, using their words.
- Tell the child that you are glad they told you and reassure them that what happened is not their fault.
- Be honest with the child – tell them who you will have to contact and why – do not promise confidentiality.
- Keep the child fully informed about what you are doing.
- Contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead – the Library Director – who will make a referral to the Children’s Duty Team.

If you have concerns regarding a staff member or volunteer behaving in an inappropriate manner whilst working with children, indicate your concerns confidentially to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Note that any disclosure or suspicions of abuse, even if later retracted must be recorded. It is essential that the details of the alleged abuse including any discussions or actions taken be recorded correctly and legibly as this will be critical in any later proceedings. This should be done immediately and certainly within 24 hours. Record the discussion accurately as soon as possible after the event. Use the child’s words or explanations. Do not destroy any evidence as it may be useful in a court of law. All records, information and confidential notes should be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or filing cabinet. Only designated persons should have access to these files.