



<b>Blue Cross Policy</b>	<b>Version:</b> 8
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## Young Persons and Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy

This policy:

<b>Applies to:</b>	<b>All Team Members</b>
<b>Person responsible for adherence/implementation:</b>	<b>Director People &amp; People Services</b>
<b>Implementation date:</b>	<b>2010 original, last version March 2025</b>
<b>Supporting documentation applicable to implementation of this policy:</b>	<b>DBS guidelines</b>



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## 1. Overview

As an organisation we regularly come into contact with children, young persons and adults at risk. We are committed to the safeguarding of young people and adults at risk (YP/AARs) and will treat any concerns or allegations seriously. We believe that everyone has the right to be protected from any type of harm or abuse and enjoy a positive and safe experience during their interactions with Blue Cross. In line with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy we recognise that some people may be put at higher risk of abuse or harm due to a characteristic protected under the Equalities Act 2010. This policy aims to ensure everyone is treated fairly, with respect and that we do all we can to protect people and provide a safe environment at Blue Cross.

## 2. Purpose, Scope and Target Audience

The purpose of this policy is to

- Provide clear definitions of terms used in relation to safeguarding
- Document the responsibilities everyone has for safeguarding and outline the role of the Safeguarding Board
- Illustrate some possible signs of abuse which may trigger a concern to be raised
- Outline the central tenets of our safeguarding approach
- Provide information on what to do to raise a concern
- Provide information on how safeguarding concerns should be recorded and how safeguarding is monitored at Blue Cross
- Document the training required for everyone in the organisation in relation to safeguarding
- Provide further guidance on working processes when implementing effective safeguarding practice

The audience for this policy is all Trustees, employees and volunteers at Blue Cross. Some of the ways we may encounter YP/AARs are as employees, volunteers, clients and supporters. Some examples of the range of activities covered are:

- Training and supporting YP/AARs in caring for animals and related roles
- Involving YP/AARs in fundraising events
- Providing work experience, Duke of Edinburgh and National Citizenship placements for YP/AARs
- Providing apprenticeships for YP/AARs
- Educating YP/AARs through the Blue Cross website, literature and educating children within schools or groups
- YP/AARs working or volunteering in Blue Cross shops and offices
- Interacting with YP/AARs online or via the telephone
- Visiting the public in their homes
- Having contact with emotional or distressed clients

## 3. Supporting Documentation

Guidelines on Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements

PLS safeguarding policy see Appendix 1

PLS risk of suicide policy see Appendix 2

Volunteer toolkit regarding work permits and prohibitions, reporting concerns, allegations and abuse

FCE policy for fundraising communications with vulnerable supporters

Whistleblowing policy

Stress and mental health policy



Guidance on post incident support

## 4. Definitions

### Definition of a young person

- A **young person** is anyone under eighteen years of age
- The law on working time defines a young worker as being below 18 years of age and above the minimum school leaving age (MSLA).

### Definition of an adult at risk

An adult at risk is any person age 18 or above who:

- Has need for care and support (regardless of the level of need and whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse and neglect
- As a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

### Definition of abuse

Abuse may consist of single or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or omission to act, or it may occur when a YP/AAR is persuaded to enter into a sexual or financial transaction to which they have not consented or cannot consent.

### Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the means of ensuring that anyone using Blue Cross is safe. Safeguarding uses processes to ensure the protection of YP/AARs from the risk of abuse or harm.

### DBS Check

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is a formal check about an individual's criminal history to determine whether a person over 16 years old is suitable for undertaking a role where they will have regular close and unsupervised contact with vulnerable groups

## 5. Responsibilities

Everyone in the organisation has a responsibility for safeguarding. The Safeguarding Board exists to ensure that the charity works together to minimise the risk of abuse or harm to YP/AARs, to protect those persons and to report matters effectively. The Safeguarding Board meet at six weekly intervals or convene as needed should a concern be raised. The Safeguarding Board comprise of:

- Director People & People Services
- Safeguarding Trustee
- Head of Volunteering & Internal Engagement
- Head of People Services
- Health and Safety Business Partner
- Head of Legal and Data Protection
- Head of Retail Operations
- Head of Veterinary Operations
- Head of Veterinary Standards
- Training & Development Partner Rehoming
- Internal Communications Manager



- Head of Philanthropy
- Hospital Manager (Grimsby)

This table outlines everyone’s responsibilities for safeguarding

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Group or person</b>
Responsible for ensuring that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blue Cross has adequate policy, process and resource in place to manage safeguarding effectively</li> </ul>	Safeguarding Trustee
Responsible for ensuring that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A safeguarding culture is embedded at Blue Cross</li> <li>• Safeguarding concerns are acted upon and learning are implemented</li> <li>• The safeguarding plan is implemented and for monitoring its performance</li> <li>• The Safeguarding policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary</li> </ul>	Safeguarding Board
Responsible for ensuring that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each directorate had the necessary resources in terms of finance, time, training and team resources to fully comply with the requirements of this policy and that the policy is followed in full</li> </ul>	Chief Executive and the Executive Team
Responsible for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulting with any third parties in an appropriate and timely manner on safeguarding matters</li> </ul>	Executive Team and Line Managers
Responsible for ensuring that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their teams are recruited in accordance with safeguarding requirements</li> <li>• Everyone is made aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding YP/AARs</li> <li>• Their teams receive appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision for the proper safeguarding of YP/AARs</li> <li>• Their teams are aware of how to report concerns, allegations and suspected abuse</li> <li>• Thorough risk assessments are conducted as appropriate</li> </ul>	All Line Managers
Responsible for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upholding their duty to protect YP/AARs involved with Blue Cross from any risks to their health, safety and wellbeing which are a consequence of their:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ lack of experience</li> <li>○ absence of awareness of existing or potential risks</li> <li>○ not yet being fully matured</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Encouraging an environment where YP/AARs are safeguarded, are able to trust and are treated with respect. In particular:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ All YP/AARs are protected from physical, sexual and emotional harm and abuse</li> <li>○ Full consideration of the wellbeing of YP/AARs is a priority</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	All Team Members



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The rights, wishes and feelings of YP/AARs are respected</li> <li>○ An appropriate level of trust is developed</li> <li>○ Where a safeguarding concern is disclosed, ensure confidentiality is maintained with the interaction with a YP/AARs and only disclose to the appropriate agency in accordance with this policy and guidance</li> </ul>	
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## 6. Possible signs of abuse

It is important to recognise, report and refer concerns about a young person or adult at risk. Examples where reporting should be considered are:

- Allegations that the person has been sexually or physically abused
- Concerns that the person is suffering from severe neglect or other severe health risks
- Concerns that the person is living in or may well be returned to a situation that may place them at immediate risk
- The person is frightened to return home
- The person has been abandoned or the parent or carer is absent
- Allegations or concerns that the person is subject to or witnessing domestic violence
- Psychological abuse e.g. threats of harm or abandonment or harassment
- Coercion into radicalisation or terrorism
- Discriminatory abuse
- Allegations or concerns that the person is subject to coercive control\*
- Financial or material abuse e.g. theft or fraud in relation to the persons financial affairs or arrangements\*
- Modern slavery e.g. human trafficking or forced labour\*
- Organisation abuse e.g. neglect or poor practice from a care provider\*
- Self-neglect\*

\*Most commonly but not exclusively associated with adults at risk

## 7. Central tenets of our Safeguarding Approach

It is our policy to:

Select and support our team with safeguarding front of mind

- Ensure Blue Cross Team members have DBS checks where needed using the DBS Guidelines for working with YP/AARs
  - Complete a criminal check risk assessment when required
  - Train Blue Cross Team members on how best to protect YP/AARs and in particular how to notify concerns and any safeguarding concerns
- post incident support should be made available for teams and team members involved

Manage our risks

- Carry out specific risk assessment for the activities performed by YP/AARs considering the following in the assessment process:
  - Their physical and psychological capacity
  - The potential for exposure to harmful agents eg chemicals and veterinary medications
  - The potential for exposure to physical agents eg manual handling, noise
- Ensure a health declaration is completed and signed by the parent/guardian or carer of the YP/AAR prior to them starting in their role to ensure they are fit to undertake the duties asked of them and to prevent injury

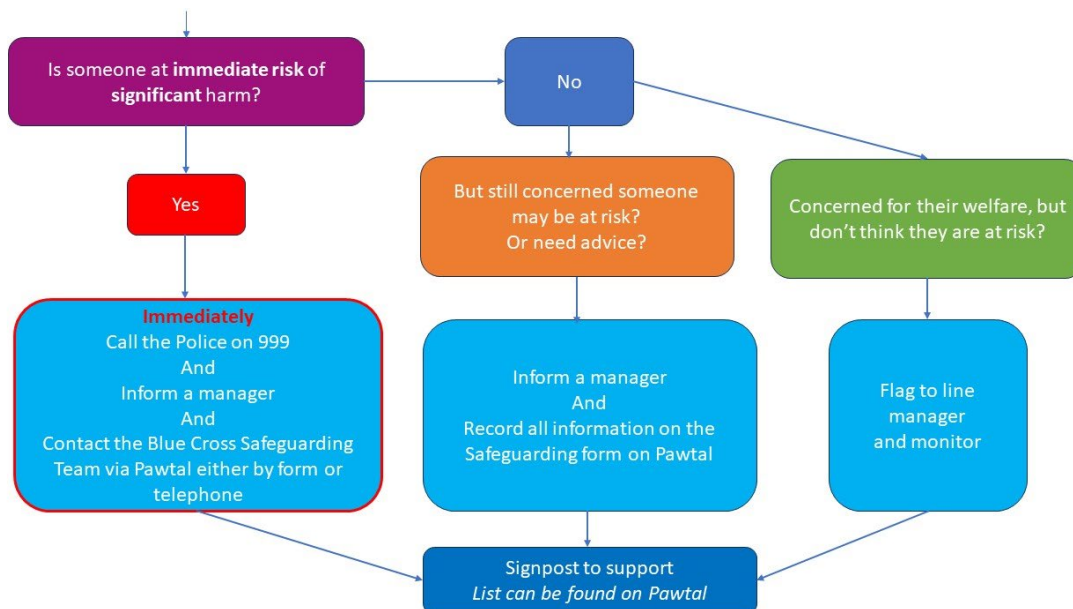


Support YP/AARs

- Provide appropriate supervision of YP/AARs activities such as using a buddy, mentor or supervisor
- Train YP/AARs and where appropriate their carers to enable them to carry out their task activities safely, including induction and role specific training
- Inform YP/AARs and their carers/parents/guardians of the policies and procedures that relate to them and how to raise a complaint or concern
- Check with the local authority no whether they have local bylaws or operate a permit system
- On social media and online situations, ensure that where a person is at risk from another person, at risk from self-harm or are experiencing suicidal thoughts and feelings, or are at risk in any other way, that action is taken and correspondence is followed up on.

**8. What to Do if You Have a Concern - Reporting flowchart**

When deciding whether to disclose a safeguarding concern refer to the guidance notes. Follow the steps in the flow chart below:



A Safeguarding Concern Report Form should be completed and sent to the Safeguarding Board at [Safeguarding@bluecross.org.uk](mailto:Safeguarding@bluecross.org.uk) or you can call **0300 777 1999**. The Safeguarding Board will provide advice and support and will decide if further action is needed. Should this be the case, they will disclose to the relevant authorities and make the Trustee for safeguarding aware.

**9. Recording and monitoring safeguarding concerns at Blue Cross**

Recording

Safeguarding concerns should be treated as confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis. Please contact the Safeguarding Board for guidance. Contact the Safeguarding Board as soon as you



become aware of a concern. Don't wait. We need to minimise the risk of GDPR breaches so the following steps should be taken when recording safeguarding concerns:

- Record concerns on the Safeguarding Concern Report form
- Any additional documentation e.g. written notes from conversations or disclosures with YP/AARs should be either scanned or transcribed and attached to the Safeguarding Concern Report form.
- Copies of evidence, e.g. screen shots of online bullying should also be attached to the Safeguarding Concern Report.
- Documents should be password protected wherever possible where they contain sensitive information and marked "private and confidential for the recipient only"
- Once you have confirmation from the Safeguarding Board that the concern has been received all copies, both electronic or hard copy should be deleted or securely destroyed
- The Safeguarding Board will retain a copy of the safeguarding concern on the H&S management system SHE and archive on the system as per accident and incident procedures in line with GDPR retention schedules

#### Monitoring

The Safeguarding Board log all safeguarding concerns on the Evotix system. These are reviewed at each meeting and trends are monitored over time. This policy and our processes are subject to audit by internal and external auditors. The Safeguarding Board are responsible for regularly reviewing this policy and updating it should a significant event or change in process occur.

#### **10. Training, information and communication**

Our policy is that everyone in the organisation will have an awareness of safeguarding and receive relevant training for their role as detailed below. We provide further guidance and resources on the dedicated Pawtal [Safeguarding Page](#). Managers are responsible for ensuring their team members have received the safeguarding training detailed below. Employees are encouraged to attend courses run by local authorities and other providers where appropriate. For further information contact [safeguarding@bluecross.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@bluecross.org.uk)



Level of access	Who	Training Required
Level 4 People who provide advice and manage safeguarding at Blue Cross	Safeguarding Board Safeguarding Trustee	Designated Safeguarding Lead Course
Level 3 Frequent unsupervised contact with YP/AARs	Education Team PBSS Team & Managers of those teams	Level 3 Safeguarding Course
Level 2 Senior management requiring basic knowledge of safeguarding Managers of teams Some regular unsupervised contact with YP/AARs	Trustees Directors All Blue Cross Managers Volunteer Co-ordinators (Rehoming & Fostering & Veterinary) Retail team Rehoming and Fostering team Veterinary teams Regular volunteers Digital Team	Keeping People Safe Blue Cross E-learning Course Astute Safeguarding Essentials
Level 1 No contact usually undertaken with YP/AARs	Infrequent or remote volunteers e.g. cheering squad or research roles. Internal employee teams e.g. IS, office based teams	Safeguarding card Employee and Volunteer Handbooks

### Guidance

This section contains more detailed guidance on the practical support of YP/AARs and dealing with concerns and allegations. The guidance includes:

#### Practical management

- Risk assessments
- Prohibitions for children
- The DBS process

#### Supporting YP/AARs

- Guidance for working with young persons and adults at risk
- Training and supervision for YP/AARs
- Managing YP/AARs who are emotional or distressed
- Child protection at Fundraising events
- Group visits to Blue Cross sites by YP/AARs

#### Dealing with concerns and allegations

- Guidance on action to take is suspecting abuse or if an allegation is made

### Risk Assessment



Although all team members should receive a satisfactory standard of protection from health and safety risks, young and vulnerable people are perceived as being at greater risk and additional control measures may need to be introduced to ensure their health and safety whilst at work. Factors known to contribute to the vulnerability of young and vulnerable people are their inexperience, lack of knowledge, lack of understanding, training, perception of danger and their immaturity - both physically and mentally.

The following must be followed

- It is a legal requirement that a risk assessment must be carried out for all young persons under the age of 18 or vulnerable persons where there is a risk to their health and safety, before they start their role. Regardless of whether any work placement organiser has carried out any risk assessments, Blue Cross must ensure that one is carried out.
- The risk assessment must take into account their psychological or physical immaturity, inexperience, and lack of awareness of existing or potential risks.
- The risk assessment must state the control measures to eliminate or minimise the risks, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- A health declaration must always be completed as part of the risk assessment process. See Appendix 3 for YVPs Health declaration and Appendix 4 for Risk assessment for YVPs. Appendix 5 is a Health and Safety checklist. Appendix 6 is a young/vulnerable person next of kin information which is required to be completed.
- For children under the MSLA (minimum school leaving age), the parents and carers must be made aware of the findings of the risk assessment. This information can be provided in any appropriate form directly to the parents or carers or, in the case of work experience, via an organisation such as the school, or the work experience organiser. In the case of work permits, the local authority may require a copy.
- The risk assessment needs to take account of the factors in the table below, which generally young or vulnerable persons should be prohibited from. Exceptions to this are where the task is part of their training, is under the supervision of a competent person and any risks are reduced to their lowest practical level reasonably possible. For example a 16 year old in an apprenticeship scheme.
- A personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) as stated in the Fire Safety Policy may be required for vulnerable persons who need assistance into and out of buildings. Guidance on PEEPS is available on Pawtal and advice should be sought from the Health and Safety Business Partner.

Beyond physical capacity	Work involving: repetitive or forceful movements, awkward postures, insufficient rest periods, imposed work rates
Beyond psychological capacity	Work involving: violence, aggression, stressful decisions, lone working
Physical agents	Work in excessive heat and cold, noise, vibration
Biological agents	Work involving exposure to bacteria, viruses and other sources of infection eg zoonoses
Chemical agents	Work involving exposure to substances which are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toxic/very toxic</li> <li>▪ Harmful</li> <li>▪ Irritant</li> <li>▪ Corrosive</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Carcinogenic</li> <li>▪ Lead</li> <li>▪ Asbestos</li> <li>▪ Prescription and non-prescription medications</li> </ul> <p>Or which cause heritable genetic damage, harm to unborn children or any other chronic health effects</p>
Radiation	Work involving ionising radiations, e.g. radioactive materials or non-ionising electromagnetic radiations, e.g. ultraviolet light, infrared radiation, electromagnetic fields.
Insufficient experience, training, maturity or perception of danger	<p>Work involving aggressive animals ie non green traffic light animals, handling, storing or using compressed, liquefied or dissolved gases, risk of structural collapse, high voltage electrical hazards.</p> <p>Working alone on a shop till</p> <p>Lone working in general</p>
Vehicles	Driving vehicles within an agricultural context e.g. tractors

### Prohibitions for children

Children under 13 years of age are generally prohibited from any form of employment unless local bylaws permit this. Blue Cross Managers will need to check the position about bylaws with their local authority before allowing a young person to work or volunteer. There are also legal requirements about the hours children can work. A risk assessment must be completed and a local authority permit granted. Generally Blue Cross does not allow young or vulnerable persons under the age of 14 to work on its behalf. However, children under 14 are permitted to accompany responsible adults, subject to individual agreement with the site manager, as laid out in SOPs. In addition

### Permits

The local authority may require permits for children under the school leaving age. Blue Cross Managers must check with the local authority if permits are required. If so, information must be sent to the local authority within 1 week of the child starting.

Once a permit has been issued, the permit must be complied with and if the permit is refused or revoked, the employment or volunteering must cease.

### Working hours

Once children have reached minimum school leaving age, under the Working Time Regulations 1999 (as amended), young workers have special rights relating to when they are able to work and the number of hours.

### Safeguarding the Young and Vulnerable - The DBS

Guidelines on the Disclosure and Barring Service are available and this provides the current position and procedure with respect to those roles within Blue Cross requiring a DBS check and where a criminal record check risk assessment is required.

### Guidelines for working with young and vulnerable persons



This will help to protect all parties from false allegation and ensure the protection of young and vulnerable people and help team members understand what acceptable behaviour in Child Protection and safeguarding terms is. This is widely accepted best practice when interacting with YVPs. However, on occasions team members may have suspected abuse reported to them via a YVP or a third party. It is important that any information is handled appropriately and sensitively. If any allegations are made against any team member, it is vital that the allegation is handled appropriately and efficiently.

- DO** treat everyone with dignity and respect
- DO** set an example you would wish others to follow
- DO** treat all young/vulnerable people equally, show no favouritism whatever their background or diversity
- DO** respect a young/vulnerable person's right to personal privacy
- DO** avoid unacceptable situations within a relationship of trust e.g. a sexual relationship with a young/vulnerable person over the age of consent
- DO** allow young/vulnerable people to talk about any concerns they may have
- DO** encourage others to challenge any attitudes or behaviours they do not like
- DO** avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour e.g. tantrums and crushes
- DO** make everyone aware of the safeguarding procedures - young people, staff, volunteers
- DO** remember these guidelines at sensitive moments e.g. when responding to bullying, bereavement or abuse
- DO** take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer immediately to your Head of Function, but do check facts and don't jump to conclusions
- DO NOT** trivialise abuse
- DO NOT** form a relationship with a young/vulnerable person that is an abuse of trust
- DO NOT** permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, bullying
- DO NOT** engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact; physical, verbal, sexual
- DO NOT** play physical contact games with young or vulnerable people
- DO NOT** make suggestive remarks or threats to a young or vulnerable person, even in fun
- DO NOT** use inappropriate language when writing, phoning, using email or the internet
- DO NOT** let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported
- DO NOT** just rely on your good name to protect you

**When supervising, mentoring or acting as a buddy, or just working alongside a young or vulnerable person, try and avoid spending long periods with a young/vulnerable person. It is better if more than one team member acts in this respect.**

**Do have regular catch ups and ask the YVP how they are when they are when you see them at Blue Cross.**

**Exceptions may be taking a young person on a home visit or to the vets. However prior parental or carers' consent must be sought.**

Information about a vulnerable person's condition or situation may only be disclosed with the permission of a parent/guardian or care or support worker.

### **Training and supervision for YP/AARs**

Young and vulnerable people should be given clear information about Blue Cross and the tasks they are expected to do, making sure they are aware of any time commitments, the location of the role and how they will be supervised.

Young and vulnerable people should be provided with comprehensible and relevant training and information on health and safety, including the findings of any relevant risk assessments. They should be



subject to an increased level of supervision to ensure that they are working in a safe manner and are not exposed to greater risk, due to their immaturity, inexperience or lack of awareness. Where possible every young person or vulnerable person should be assigned a Blue Cross supervisor, mentor or buddy whose role is to act as a liaison and a point of contact and to oversee the tasks they carry out. Vulnerable persons may also have permanent carers or support workers who will need to work alongside them at all times and will require training on the health and safety risks. Support workers or carers must provide adequate supervision of the YVP and comply with any Blue Cross policies and procedures. Their responsibilities must be clearly defined.

### **Managing people who are emotional or distressed**

From time to time due to the nature of Blue Cross work, teams will encounter individuals in extreme emotional states or distressed for example through the work of Supporter care, PLS, or through veterinary and rehoming & fostering work. It is essential that the health and wellbeing of these individuals is maintained so far as is reasonably practicable. It is important to view people as individuals rather than making assumptions based upon a suspected diagnosis e.g. mental health condition. The following 5 principles of mental health first aid should be followed:

1. Assess the risk of suicide or self-harm
2. Listen non judgementally
3. Give reassurance and information
4. Encourage the person to get appropriate professional help
5. Encourage self-help strategies

If you are concerned that an individual will commit suicide or self-harm, then call the Police. If the individual is an employee, there is also access to the EAP (Employee Assistance Programme) on 0800 107 6147, where a manager referral can be made for more longer-term support.

### **Child protection at fundraising events**

Fundraising events will often either involve children or they will be a part of the general public attending such events. The event organiser must during the risk assessment process consider child protection measures as appropriate. As a minimum this will mean having 'lost and found' child procedures with a designated point identified and ensuring that appropriate team member cover is provided for children's activities. It is good practice for at least 2 team members to be involved in children's activities and to have the child's parent and guardian present.

Third party organisations providing services at Blue Cross events, e.g. face-painting, should be requested to provide child safeguarding procedures as part of their health and safety documentation.

### **Group visits to Blue Cross sites by YVPs**

Appropriate risk assessments need to be conducted and where reasonably practical health, safety and welfare issues addressed. Blue Cross sites should liaise with parents, carers and support organisations as appropriate.

Where YVPs make visits to Blue Cross sites, adequate facilities such as accessible wash-hand basins, warm water, anti-bacterial hand wash and reminder notices on good hygiene must be available.

### **Guidance on action to take if suspecting abuse or if an allegation is made**

The four main areas of abuse are:-

- Physical where a person is caused pain, hurt or injury, given harmful substances or by neglect.



- Sexual where a person is used to gratify the sexual desire of another person, physically or otherwise.
- Emotional where a person is caused distress, emotional trauma or psychological damage by severe or persistent verbal abuse or neglect.
- Neglect is the failure to meet basic physical/psychological needs, likely to result in major effects in health or development

These may come to attention through a number of ways:-

- When a young/vulnerable person tells you something has happened.
- An adult or young/vulnerable person tells you about their concerns for another person.
- You observe unexplained injury, changes in behaviour that cause concern.
- You receive an allegation about another person or about yourself. It is a duty to report the concern.

Young/vulnerable people tell people about abuse when they trust that person and see that person as safe. Team members in those circumstances should:-

- Listen carefully to what the young/vulnerable person is saying
- Show you take them seriously
- Avoid asking the young/vulnerable person to repeat information
- Explain that you cannot keep what the person tells you a secret
- Reassure the young/vulnerable person that they have done the right thing
- Make no judgement about what you have heard and stay calm
- Make an immediate, careful record of what has been said, use the young/vulnerable persons actual words whenever possible. The Safeguarding concern report form should be used to record the basic details.

What happens if a young/vulnerable person tells you about abuse by someone else:

1. Allow the young/vulnerable person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said
2. Offer immediate understanding and reassurance, while passing no judgment
3. Advise that you will try to offer support but that you must pass the information on
4. Immediately tell your line manager
5. Write careful notes of what was said; use actual words wherever possible
6. Explain what has to happen next and who has to be told
7. Sign, date and pass your notes/ Safeguarding concern report form to your line manager and the Safeguarding Board ASAP and ideally within 24 hours.
8. Ensure that no further situation arises which could cause any further concern

*Note: In an emergency (young/vulnerable person at imminent risk of significant harm) contact police or social service/work department direct. Inform your line manager, the Safeguarding Board of the action you have taken.*

If you have a concern about a young/vulnerable person's safety and wellbeing:

1. Immediately tell your line manager and the Safeguarding Board
2. Write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard or were told
3. Sign, date and pass your notes/Safeguarding concern report form to the Safeguarding Board ASAP and ideally within 24 hours
4. Ensure that no further situation arises which could cause any further concern

If you receive a complaint or allegation about any adult or about yourself:

1. Immediately tell your line manager and the Safeguarding Board
2. Write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard or were told



3. Sign, date and pass your notes/ Safeguarding concern report form to your line manager and the Safeguarding Board ASAP and ideally within 24 hours

4. Try to ensure no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise

*Note: Any adult in Blue Cross has the right to report any concerns, or suspicions about another team member in confidence and free from harassment.*

*You must refer; you must not investigate.*

*If in any doubt about policy or procedure please contact People & People Services.*

#### Decision to refer to authorities

A decision may need to be made to refer the safeguarding concern to the authorities such as police or social services. The decision to refer should be made by the Safeguarding Board. The Safeguarding concern report form will need completion with all details. When a referral is made, this should be followed up in writing within 48 hours of the initial contact/phone call. When a referral is made, the Trustee for Safeguarding and CEO/Director should be informed and any YVP risk assessment reviewed. In the event of a YVP being in imminent danger, or if an urgent safeguarding incident occurs out of hours, a referral can be made to the police or social service immediately by the person identifying the concern or their line manager. The Safeguarding concern report form should be completed and forwarded on ASAP. The matter must be handled confidentially and not discussed with anyone else. The form is available electronically at [Safeguarding Form \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

#### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 PLS Safeguarding SOP

Appendix 2 PLS Risk of suicide SOP

Appendix 3 YP/AARs Health Declaration

Appendix 4 YP/AARs Risk Assessment Form

Appendix 5 YP/AARs Health and Safety Checklist

Appendix 6 YP/AARs Next of kin form

#### **Appendix 1 Pet Loss Support (PLS, previously PBSS) Safeguarding SOP**

The first principle of safeguarding is that it is everyone's responsibility. Legally we need to consider the safeguarding of children and adults at risk of abuse, harm or exploitation when we work or volunteer with them. Blue Cross has a Young Persons and Adults at Risk Safeguarding policy and this PLS policy fits into this but gives more detail of how this works in conjunction with the PLS helpline and email support we offer the public.

Here are the legal definitions of those who we need to protect:

- A child is anyone under the age of 18, no matter the circumstances
- An "Adult at Risk" (formerly called a Vulnerable Adult) is defined as any person aged 18 years and over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental health issues, learning or physical disability, sensory impairment, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.

Pre-existing health conditions can be brought on again or made worse by the stress of bereavement and may mean a person is more at risk than previously.

There are seven different kinds of abuse:

- Physical – to inflict pain, physical injury or suffering, including suicide
- Sexual – underage sexual activity; non consenting sexual act or behaviour



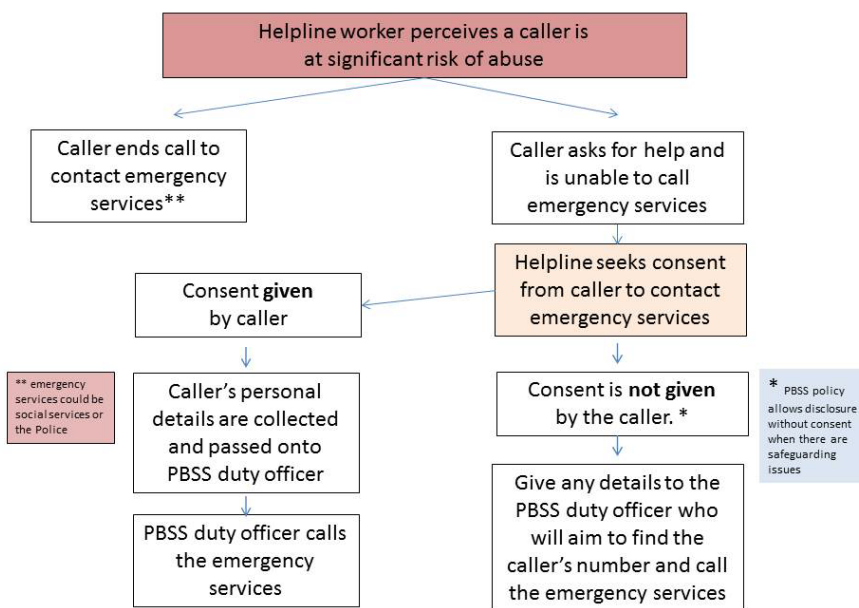
- Emotional – use of threat, fear or power to invalidate a person’s wishes
- Neglect – a person’s well-being is impaired when their care needs aren’t met
- Financial – misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions
- Spiritual – in appropriate use of religious belief or practice
- Discriminatory – inappropriate treatment of a person because of age, gender, race, cultural background, sexuality or disability
- Institutional – mistreatment of a person by a regime or individuals within an institution

Volunteers will receive training in how to respond to calls or emails where they suspect a safeguarding issue.

Process to follow

**If an email volunteer** suspects the client is at significant risk or are at risk of abusing others, they should telephone the PLS duty officer and forward all email conversations to the PLS team inbox with ‘Safeguarding risk’ in the subject heading.

**If a helpline volunteer** suspects that a caller is at significant risk themselves or are at risk of abusing others then the following process should be followed:



PLS duty officer role:

On receiving a report of a safeguarding issue about a caller from a volunteer the PLS duty officer will need to go through the call with the volunteer and gather any information they have about the caller including their phone number from the Virtual Call Centre (VCC). They should listen to the call recording and make their own assessment of risk.

If the safeguarding threat is thought to be high risk and imminent and we do not have an address for the caller, then contact the Police immediately. If you have the caller’s phone number from the VCC, then pass that on too. If you have an address, then contact their local social services. They will have a number for emergencies if it is out of hours. Complete a safeguarding form and send to the Blue Cross safeguarding team. Any correspondence should be marked ‘private & confidential for recipient only’ or password protected.



If the safeguarding threat is not imminent then you should complete a safeguarding report form and contact the Blue Cross safeguarding team asap. If a decision is made to contact the authorities these are:

- Either the police, if you have a telephone number but don't have an address,
- Or the local social services team – if you have an address.

They will then make their own assessment of risk.

If this is out of hours or over a weekend then the PLS manager or Head of Education Services should be contacted.

On receiving a report of a safeguarding risk from an emailer the PLS duty officer will then raise this with the PLS manager. High risk cases will be reported to the Blue Cross safeguarding board.

Place a follow up call to the volunteer following a safeguarding risk call to ensure they are okay and whether they need further support.

In either case (helpline or email line) the volunteer involved will be told whether the concern was passed on to the authorities

## Appendix 2 PLS Risk of Suicide SOP

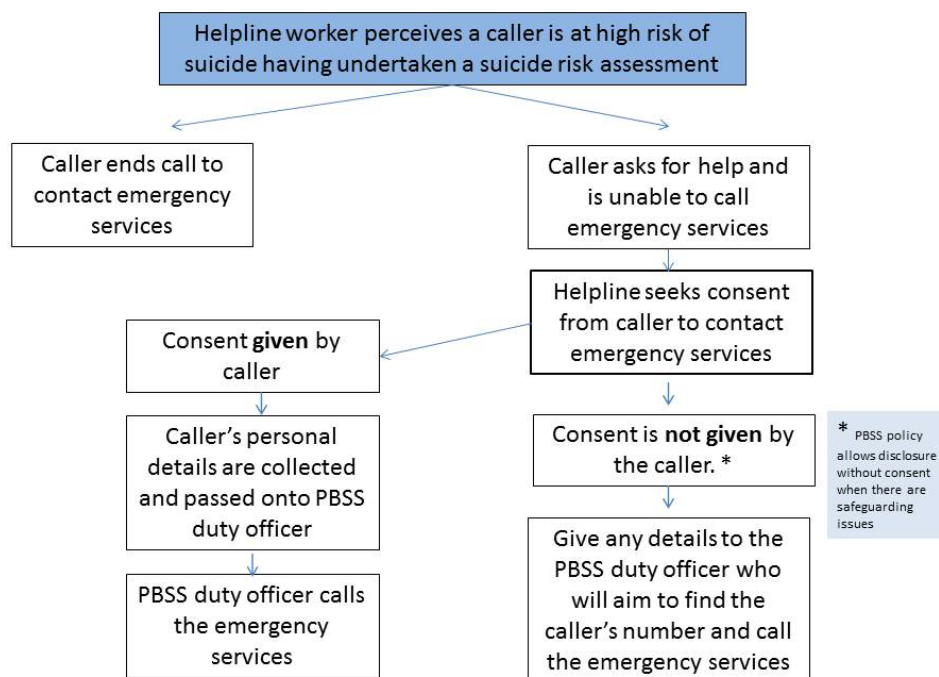
As the service provides emotional support to animal owners who are experiencing feelings of loss and bereavement, PLS support line volunteers may on occasion, come into contact with service users who express suicidal thoughts and feelings. These should always be taken seriously.

Suicidal callers come under our Safeguarding Policy. The helpline volunteer should follow the following process:

Carry out an assessment to find out the level of risk of suicide. You can explain that this is what you are doing.

If the level is high then explain to the caller that you will need to share the information so they can receive help. Ask for their consent to share their details. Get their name, address and phone number.

Here is a flow diagram to help you:





**PLS duty officer role:**

On receiving a report of a suicide call from a volunteer the PLS duty officer will need to go through the risk assessment with the volunteer and gather any information they have about the caller including their phone number from the Virtual Call Centre (VCC). They should then listen to the call recording themselves.

If the suicide risk level is high and thought to be imminent and we do not have an address for the caller, then contact the Police immediately. If you have an address, then contact their local social services. They will have a number for emergencies if it is out of hours. Complete a safeguarding form and send to the Blue Cross safeguarding team.

If the threat of suicide is not imminent but the risk still high then you should complete a safeguarding report and contact the Blue Cross safeguarding team asap. If a decision is made to contact the authorities these are:

- Either the police, if you have a telephone number but don't have an address,
- Or the local social services team – if you have an address.

They will then make their own assessment of risk.

If this is out of hours or over a weekend then the Head of Education Services should be contacted.

Place a follow up call to the volunteer following a suicide call to ensure they are okay and whether they need further support.

Appendix 1 Suicide risk assessment

**Suicide risk assessment screening questions**

Measure	Question
Ideation	Have you had thoughts of taking your own life?
Plans	Have you made any plans to take your life?
Means	Do you have access to the tools or situation to take your own life according to your plan?
Intent	Do you intend to commit suicide? When?
History	Have you ever tried to take your own life?

Suicide risk	Next steps
Low risk	Suggest ways of staying safe
Moderate risk	Signpost to GP or community mental health team if they are a patient
High risk	Safeguarding concern - needs help immediately. Signpost as above and contact Pet Loss Support duty officer with any contact info you have



### Appendix 3 General Health Declaration

## General Health Declaration

We are asking you to complete this form so that we can ensure that any reasonable adjustments are made to support you in your role, if required. This information will only be used for internal purposes and will be stored in accordance with our retention schedule.

Full Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr):

Role:

Location:

- Have you a health condition/disability which may impact your ability to do the role? Yes/No  
If yes, please provide details in the box below.
- Do you require any reasonable aids, adaptations or adjustments to the workplace which can assist you in performing your role? Yes/No  
If yes, please provide details in the box below.

If answered yes, do you give your consent to share the information with your line manager? Yes/No

If answered yes, please provide additional information:

- Will you perform work predominantly at night (11pm -6am) for at least three hours on most days of work?  
Yes/No/Not aware
- Will you be handling estate and work equipment subject to vibrating hazards? Yes/No/Not aware
- Will you be driving on Blue Cross business (ie to training, meetings, travel between sites which does not include commuting to main place of work)? Yes/No/Not aware

Signature:

Date:



#### Appendix 4 Young and vulnerable person's risk assessment

Details of Young Person/Vulnerable Person Risk Assessment					
Centre/Hospital/Office/Shop		Supervisor/Line Manager		Date of assessment	
Risk Assessor Name and Position		Risk Assessor Signature		Review date	

Section 1 – Identify hazards – tick all relevant hazards														
1.	Slips, trips, housekeeping		7.	Use of portable tools/equipment		13.	Lighting levels		19.	Hazardous chemical, dust		25.	Occupational stress	
2.	Fall of person (from work at height)		8.	Fixed machinery or equipment		14.	Heating and ventilation		20.	Hazardous biological agent/zoonoses		26.	Welfare facilities	
3.	Fall of objects		9.	Vehicles/driving at work		15.	Fire hazards		21.	Handling/contact animals		27.	Food preparation	
4.	Manual handling operations		10.	Pressure vessels/gas cylinders		16.	Layout storage space obstructions		22.	Outdoor work/extreme weather		28.	Special needs	
5.	Workstation use		11.	Noise/vibration		17.	Conditions of building and glazing		23.	Lone working/out of hours		29.	Other (S) - specify	
6.	Electrical equipment		12.	Radiation sources		18.	Confined space/asphyxiation		24.	Person aggression/Violence		30.		

Section 2 - Who may be at risk – Complete details of person at risk				
Name of young person/Vulnerable person		Status Employee/Volunteer/Work Experience/Other  Fulltime/Part time		Work activities



Note: Please remember that responsible behaviour from Young/Vulnerable persons should not be taken for granted.

Section 3 - Risk controls – For each hazard identified in Section 1 and for the person identified in Section 2, complete this section						
Hazard no.	Hazard description	Existing controls	Risk level			Further action needed and include who is to action and by when
			High	Med	Low	

**The parent/guardian must be informed of the outcomes of the risk assessment for a young person under school leaving age**

## Appendix 5 Young & Vulnerable Person's Checklist

Details Of the Young/Vulnerable Person			
Name		Centre/Hospital/Shop/Office	
Supervisor/Line Manager		Name of Assessor	
Signature of assessor		Date	

Item		Action to be taken/Recommended
Has a pre-employment health declaration been completed?	Yes/No	
Have relevant risk assessments been carried out and the results communicated appropriately?	Yes/No	
Has the school/college provided their own risk assessment on this Young Person?	Yes/No	
Does the young/vulnerable person require a support worker or carer? If yes, what are the reasons for this support? What are the responsibilities of the carer/support worker?	Yes/No  Please provide details	
Is the work within the Young/Vulnerable Person's physical or psychological capacity?	Yes/No	
Is the Young/Vulnerable Person safe from harmful exposure to toxic or carcinogenic agents, or agents which cause harm to the unborn child or which in any other way chronically affect human health?	Yes/No	
Is the Young/Vulnerable Person safe from harmful exposure to radiation?	Yes/No	
Is the Young/Vulnerable Person safe from difficult/aggressive animals, compressed gases and any other situations that could pose a risk due to the Young/Vulnerable Persons insufficient attention to safety or lack of experience or training?	Yes/No	
Is the Young Person/Vulnerable person safe from risk to health from extreme cold or heat, noise or vibration?	Yes/No	
Is any required manual handling within the physical capabilities of the Young/Vulnerable person?	Yes/No	
Are machines used by the Young/Vulnerable Person adequately guarded, particularly the dangerous parts?	Yes/No	



Item		Action to be taken/Recommended
Is additional training and stricter supervision adopted when Young/Vulnerable Persons are required to work with animals?	Yes/No	
Are Young/Vulnerable Persons subjected to tests of competency when working with animals?	Yes/No	
Is suitable and sufficient training and supervision given prior to or during the work activity?	Yes/No	
Is the Young/Vulnerable Person aware that they should inform their supervisor/manager of any verbal or physical abuse they are subjected to immediately?	Yes/No	
Are all Young/Vulnerable Persons given adequate daily rest breaks?	Yes/No	
Does the Young/Vulnerable person have a clear understanding of the role, the time commitment and location, and the supervision procedures and key contacts?	Yes/No	
Does the Young/Vulnerable person have any difficulties with perception and understanding so that they are able to do what is being asked of them?	Yes/No	

List the activities which you will allow the Young/Vulnerable person to undertake, which you have assessed as safe:

Notes

- a) If No, and this is not under training and supervised conditions and where any risk has been reduced to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable, then the Young/Vulnerable Person should not be engaged in that activity.
- b) A new checklist should be completed for each young/vulnerable person. Should details of the work activity change, then this checklist and the risk assessment must be reviewed.
- c) The parent/guardian must be informed of the outcomes of the risk assessment for a young person under school leaving age.



**Appendix 6**  
**Work Experience/Young and Vulnerable persons next of kin information**

Name of student/  
young/vulnerable person .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Tel No: (daytime) .....

Tel No: (evening) .....

Mobile No: .....

Please supply below 'Emergency Contact' details listing the person you would want us to contact should the need arise. **If at any time during your employment or period of work experience this information should change, you must notify us without delay.**

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Contact Tel No:(daytime) .....

Contact Tel No: (evening) .....

Mobile Tel No: .....

G.P. Name and  
Contact Tel No: .....

Signature of work experience student  
/young/vulnerable person or guardian/carer: .....