



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Bridge Counselling is committed to promoting the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults and operating the counselling service in a way to ensure that they are safe and protected.

This policy enables the promotion of good practice in counselling when working alongside children and vulnerable adults; including those who are expressing thoughts of suicide and/or serious self-harm. This ensures that everyone concerned knows what to expect in terms of good conduct and accountability, and that any boundaries set are respected at all times.

If the counsellor feels that the client is in danger of, or has expressed thoughts of suicide or self-harm, the procedure is to be applied.

This policy applies to all Staff, Trustees, Counsellors and Volunteers who are part of Bridge Counselling and covers face to face and online proceedings.

It is to ensure:

- a) All those connected with the counselling service, (including clients), are protected
- b) All Counsellors, and those connected with the service, are aware of what abuse is, how to identify it and the procedures to follow if abuse is suspected

To fulfil this policy Bridge Counselling will appoint a designated named person as a Safeguarding Coordinator to which all alerts of suspected abuse must be made, and who will be responsible to determine the action to follow.

Bridge Counselling will ensure that appropriate training and support will be made available as needed and updated regularly.

Bridge Counselling and Trustees will:

- a) Commit to the nurturing, protection and safety of all, especially children and vulnerable adults with whom we have contact in connection with counselling activities
- b) Recognise it is the responsibility of each one of us, where possible, to prevent the physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable adults and to report any abuse discovered or suspected
- c) Undertake to exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with vulnerable adults and children, whether paid or unpaid volunteer

This policy defines:

Children – all children aged 18 and under

Vulnerable adults are people aged 18 years or over, who may be at increased risk of abuse. The following factors could determine this:

- a) Learning, sensory or physical disability

Bridge Counselling, c/o Bromham Baptist Church, Village Road, Bromham, MK43 8LJ

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- b) Old age and frailty, especially if it creates dependency on, or needing help from, others
- c) Mental health problems
- d) Dementia or confusion
- e) Severe illness
- f) In addition, adults may be made vulnerable by means of a permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity brought about by life events e.g. an illness, bereavement, past abuse or trauma

SAFEGUARDING LEAD

All referrals or alert of suspected abuse will be made to the Bridge Counselling Safeguarding Coordinator:

Name: Mrs Jenny Hadley

Email: safeguarding@bridgecounselling.org

If a decision is made by Safeguarding Coordinator to refer, this will mean contact either to:-

Bedford's Children's Safeguarding Services i.e. Integrated Front Door

Telephone number 01234 718700

Out of hour's number: 03003008123

OR

Bedford's Local Multi Agency Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult's Board

Telephone number 01234 718700

Out of hour's number 03003008123

Relevant Legislation:

Working Together to safeguard Children 2018

Children's Act 2004

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Safeguarding Adults NHS England Guide

Data Protection Act 2018

Discrimination Equality Act 2010

No Secrets: Department of Health, 2000

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