



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Sandco (South East) Ltd trading as BYND Mentoring

Approved by Sam Watson, Designated Safeguarding Lead

Effective date 15 September 2026 | Next annual review 15 September 2027

Early information sharing review by 30 September 2026

Our commitment

We put children's safety and welfare first. We listen to children, take concerns seriously and act promptly to protect them from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Every person working for BYND must follow this policy and challenge unsafe practice.

Who this policy covers

BYND provides mentoring and therapeutic support to young people aged 5 to 18 in Kent and Medway. Counselling is delivered by qualified counsellors registered with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). This policy applies to employees, freelance mentors, therapists and anyone acting on BYND's behalf, in schools, homes and community venues. BYND does not transport children or take them off school premises.

A child is anyone under 18. For service users who have turned 18, staff must use adult safeguarding arrangements where appropriate and plan a safe transition; see section 6. Our professional boundaries and commitment to safety continue to apply.

BYND safeguarding contacts

Role	Name and contact
Designated Safeguarding Lead and policy owner	Sam Watson 01227 686787 hello@gobynd.org
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Daisy Watson Daisy@gobynd.org Office telephone 01227 686787

Office: Unit 40, District Park, Manston Road, Kent, CT9 4JZ.

The office number and email are not emergency services. Do not wait for a reply if a child is at risk.

Immediate danger: call 999. Direct referral contacts are in section 6.

1 What to do when you are concerned

Act immediately

Any worker may refer directly to children's social care or the police. Permission from BYND, a school or a parent is not required to report a child protection concern. If a child needs emergency protection or urgent medical help, call 999 and take reasonable steps to keep them safe without placing anyone at further risk.

Listen and record

- Stay calm, listen and let the child speak in their own words. Reassure them that telling you was right and that abuse is not their fault. Explain who needs to know and why; never promise secrecy.
- Ask only enough open questions to clarify immediate safety. Do not lead, investigate, repeatedly question the child, confront an alleged perpetrator or ask a child to show injuries beneath clothing.
- Make a dated and signed record as soon as possible, on the same day. Use the child's exact words where possible, distinguish facts from your opinion, and record observations, people present, actions and times. Do not delay a referral to finish a form.

When working in a school

Speak immediately to the school's DSL or deputy and notify BYND's DSL or deputy. Complete BYND's safeguarding concern form on site and share it securely with the school DSL. Confirm whether the school requires an entry on its own safeguarding system and complete the agreed process.

Before leaving, obtain a clear handover: the name of the person accepting the concern, confirmation that immediate safety has been addressed, who will make any referral and the agreed next action. Record this. Sending an email or leaving a form is not a completed handover. Staff need not remain until an investigation is concluded, but must not leave an unresolved immediate risk unaddressed.

If the school DSL is unavailable, refuses to act, or the response does not protect the child, contact children's social care or the police directly and tell BYND's DSL. Do not let a disagreement or the end of a shift delay protection.

In homes and community venues

Contact BYND's DSL or deputy immediately. The DSL coordinates the referral and safe arrangements for the child, involving the commissioning school where relevant. If neither lead can be reached promptly, staff must refer directly. Do not wait for the next school day or session. Where an adult at the venue may pose a risk, seek social care or police advice before discussing the concern with them.

Follow through

The DSL records the referral, receiving professional and next steps. Check for the social care response within one working day; chase missing responses sooner where risk requires. Continue checking the child's safety, contribute to assessments and plans, and re-refer or use the local professional escalation procedure if concerns remain. Where a referral is not made, record the reasons, support plan and review date. Early or Family Help must never delay a protection referral.

2 Recognising harm and supporting children

Staff must act on a disclosure, observation, pattern of concerns or information from another person. Proof is not required. Harm can happen at home, in school, in the community or online, and may involve adults or other children.

Abuse neglect and exploitation

- Physical abuse: deliberate injury or harm, including fabricated or induced illness. Watch for unexplained injuries, inconsistent accounts or fear of a particular person.
- Emotional abuse: persistent humiliation, threats, rejection, coercion or exposure to frightening behaviour. Notice marked changes in confidence, behaviour, relationships or emotional wellbeing.
- Sexual abuse: contact or non-contact sexual activity involving a child, including grooming, exposure to sexual material and abuse through technology. A child may not recognise that they are being abused.
- Neglect: failure to meet a child's physical or emotional needs. Patterns may include hunger, inadequate clothing, poor hygiene, unmet health needs, lack of supervision or persistent absence.

Consider domestic abuse, bullying and discriminatory abuse, sexual harassment and violence, criminal or sexual exploitation, county lines, trafficking, radicalisation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and so-called honour-based abuse. Unexplained gifts, money, older associates, missing episodes or sudden secrecy may indicate exploitation. Apparent agreement does not make exploitation acceptable.

Respond to specific risks

Child-on-child abuse is never dismissed as banter or growing up. Protect and support the child harmed and assess the needs and risks of the child alleged to have caused harm. Consult the school and statutory agencies, arrange safe separation where needed and do not use mediation as a substitute for safeguarding action.

For nude or sexual images of children, including AI-generated images, do not ask for copies, forward, download or deliberately view them. Record the concern without reproducing the image and seek DSL and police advice on preserving evidence. Report online grooming and sexual coercion through the same safeguarding route.

For suspected FGM, forced marriage or honour-based abuse, seek specialist statutory advice before involving family members; do not mediate. A worker subject to the statutory FGM reporting duty must make the required personal police report. Other staff still refer concerns promptly. Radicalisation concerns go to the DSL and the local Prevent referral route, with police involvement where needed.

Take self-harm, suicidal thoughts and serious mental distress seriously. Seek urgent health or emergency support according to risk and consider abuse or exploitation. Mentoring is not a substitute for emergency or specialist treatment.

Make it possible for every child to speak

Offer accessible communication, time and a trusted adult. Consider disability, SEND, language, discrimination and previous trauma. Do not attribute injuries or changes in behaviour to a diagnosis without considering harm. Respect children regardless of their background or protected characteristics. Explain safeguarding and how to complain in words they understand; record their wishes without making them responsible for protection decisions.

3 Safe recruitment and everyday practice

People who work for BYND

BYND checks suitability before staff or freelancers undertake unsupervised work. Checks include identity, right to work, qualifications, employment history and gaps, references verified with their source, and the appropriate enhanced DBS check. A children's barred-list check is obtained for eligible regulated activity. We check overseas history where relevant and record the checks and decisions. A DBS certificate alone does not establish suitability.

Counsellors must have verified qualifications, current BACP registration, competence to work with the relevant age group and appropriate clinical supervision. Freelancers follow the same safeguarding reporting and conduct requirements as employees. We provide commissioning schools with the required written assurance of checks and workers carry identification.

Training and supervision

All workers receive safeguarding induction before starting, annual safeguarding training and a refresher every six months. They read this policy and KCSIE Part One and learn the school or venue reporting arrangements. The DSL and deputy must have role-specific training, updated at least every two years, with knowledge refreshed at least annually. The DSL keeps training and policy acknowledgement records and checks competence before allocating work.

Supervision provides a regular opportunity to discuss risk, boundaries and wellbeing. Workers report new suitability concerns, relevant criminal matters and changes that may affect safe practice immediately. No worker must wait for supervision to report a child protection concern.

Sessions in schools homes and community venues

Before support begins, agree referral information, the purpose and limits of the service, consent arrangements appropriate to age and understanding, emergency contacts and relevant risks. Explain confidentiality and safeguarding exceptions to the child and parent or carer. Record the child's views and revisit consent if the service changes.

Risk-assess the venue and individual needs. Use an appropriate room that offers privacy without unsafe isolation; ensure another responsible adult knows where and when the session is taking place. For home and community work, agree arrival, departure, parent or carer availability, collection and lone-working check-in arrangements. Staff must be able to summon help and end an unsafe visit. Record and escalate missed sessions or unexplained absence according to risk.

Professional boundaries

- Use approved work accounts and communication channels. No private social-media friendships, secret messaging, personal gifts or unauthorised meetings with children.
- No sexual or romantic relationships with service users, humiliating behaviour, corporal punishment, or work under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Report boundary concerns, including your own mistakes.
- Physical contact must be necessary, appropriate and explained, taking account of the child's wishes. Do not use restraint as behaviour management. Any emergency intervention must be lawful, necessary and proportionate, and reported and recorded immediately.
- Do not photograph or record sessions on personal devices. Any authorised image or recording requires a clear purpose, appropriate consent and secure handling. Use approved devices and appropriate online safeguards for session activities.

4 Concerns about adults working with children

This procedure covers employees, freelancers, therapists, managers and others working with children. It includes conduct outside work and online that may affect suitability.

Report and protect

Tell Sam Watson immediately if an adult may have harmed a child, committed an offence involving a child, presented a risk to children, or behaved in a way that raises concern about their suitability. Do not investigate first or promise confidentiality. Protect the child and preserve relevant records.

If the concern is about Sam, report directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), using section 6, without notifying Sam first. Daisy may help with immediate safety where there is no conflict of interest. If the concern is about Daisy, report to Sam or directly to the LADO. Where either lead is implicated or independence is in doubt, use the external route. Neither lead may investigate a concern about themselves.

The person managing the concern contacts the appropriate LADO without delay and within 24 hours of becoming aware of the allegation. Seek advice if the threshold is unclear. Contact police or children's social care immediately where necessary; LADO involvement does not replace a child protection referral. In Kent, professionals use the LADO referral portal. In Medway, use the professional referral form.

Manage the response fairly

Agree with the LADO and, where involved, police or social care who will inform the individual and family, what enquiries may occur, and what information can be shared. Take proportionate protective action and assess whether duties must change or contact with children must stop. Suspension is not automatic. Record decisions and provide suitable support to the child and worker without compromising enquiries.

Where a school is involved, liaise with its headteacher or relevant senior safeguarding representative and the LADO, preserving BYND's responsibilities as employer or engager. If the allegation involves a school employee or headteacher, follow the school's appropriate reporting route and refer externally if necessary.

Concerns below the harm threshold

Report and record behaviour inconsistent with professional boundaries even if it appears minor, such as favouritism, inappropriate messages or unnecessary isolated contact. The DSL reviews concerns for patterns and decides action, consulting the LADO if uncertain. A low-level concern is not an insignificant concern. Use the same independent route for concerns about a safeguarding lead.

Referrals and speaking up

BYND makes a DBS referral where the legal conditions are met, including where a person is removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left, because of relevant harm or risk. Resignation, a settlement or the end of a freelance contract does not remove that duty. Consider referral to the relevant professional body, including BACP, where appropriate.

Workers may contact the LADO, police, social care or NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line directly if they cannot raise a concern safely internally or believe it is being mishandled. BYND will not penalise a person for raising an honestly held safeguarding concern. Safeguarding matters must not wait for the complaints process.

5 Records information sharing and oversight

A clear record for each concern

The BYND concern form must capture the child's identity, date and time, source of concern, exact words and observations, immediate risk, action taken, people notified, referral details and follow-up. Include the child's wishes, decisions about informing parents and reasons for sharing or not sharing information. Correct errors transparently without obscuring the original record.

The DSL is responsible for BYND's safeguarding records. Keep a separate protected child protection file for each child, with access restricted to the DSL, deputy and others with a recorded need to know. Records about a lead must be protected from that person and handled through the independent case arrangements. Sharing a form with a school does not remove BYND's need for an appropriate record of its own actions.

Use encrypted or otherwise approved secure transfer, verify the recipient and confirm receipt. Store paper records in locked storage and electronic records in access-controlled storage with appropriate device security and backups. Do not use personal email, personal cloud storage or general messaging groups. Report any loss or unauthorised disclosure immediately to the DSL, who assesses containment and applicable data-breach reporting duties.

Share to protect

Share relevant, accurate and proportionate information promptly with those who can protect or support the child. Data protection law does not prohibit necessary safeguarding sharing. Record the lawful basis and any special-category condition relied on. Explain sharing to the child and family where safe; do not seek consent or notify parents where this could increase risk or undermine an investigation. Seek prompt advice if unsure, without delaying urgent action.

The information-sharing duty under section 16LA of the Children Act 2004 commences on 30 September 2026. By that date, the DSL must check how it applies to BYND's commissioned services and update staff instructions and school agreements. Where it applies, share relevant information as required, subject to the statutory detriment exception and data protection requirements. The duty is not treated as already in force on this policy's approval date.

Retention and disposal

BYND's child protection files are retained until the young person's 25th birthday, with a documented review before disposal. Retain longer where an investigation, legal hold, safeguarding need or applicable contractual requirement justifies it. Allegation records about workers follow the applicable LADO and employment guidance, normally until normal pension age or ten years after the allegation, whichever is later; consult the LADO on findings requiring different treatment. Review low-level concern records when employment ends and retain further only with a documented reason. Destroy records securely and log disposal.

Responsibility and review

Sam Watson is accountable for implementing this policy; Daisy Watson provides deputy cover. A lead or agreed safeguarding cover must be reachable during delivery. Staff retain the direct-referral route at all times. The DSL checks handovers, referrals, training, recruitment and record security, acts on learning and reviews the policy at least annually and sooner after changes in law, guidance, services or incidents. Staff must receive and acknowledge updates.

6 Referral contacts and guidance

For immediate danger or urgent emergency assistance call 999. For non-emergency police reporting call 101. Use the child's local authority; if jurisdiction is unclear, seek help immediately and ask services to coordinate. Do not delay a referral over boundaries.

Service	Contact or route
Kent children's social care	03000 411111 Out of hours 03000 419191 Kent Children's Portal via the link below
Medway children's social care	01634 334466, Monday to Friday 9am–5pm Out of hours 03000 419191 Online referral via the link below
Kent LADO and LESAS	Professional referrals through the LADO portal Enquiries through the LESAS enquiry form Both are linked on the Kent LADO page below
Medway LADO	01634 331065 Professional referral form on the page below
Independent advice and support	NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 Childline 0800 1111 NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line 0800 028 0285

Young people aged 18

At 18, consider adult safeguarding where the person has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and cannot protect themselves because of those needs. Involve the young adult and seek adult social care advice. Kent: 03000 416161. Medway: 01634 334466. Both out of hours: 03000 419191. Call 999 for emergencies. A concern involving other children must still be referred to children's services.

Local referral pages

[Kent child concern reporting and Children's Portal](#)

[Medway child concern reporting](#)

[Kent LADO referrals and LESAS enquiries](#)

[Medway LADO referrals](#)

Policy framework

This policy operates within the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Equality Act 2010, applicable sexual offences and FGM legislation, and UK data protection law. BYND follows local Kent and Medway procedures and works with schools' safeguarding arrangements. KCSIE applies directly to schools and colleges; BYND uses its relevant standards in delivering services to them.

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026](#)

[DfE information sharing guidance updated September 2026](#)

[DfE safeguarding guidance for out-of-school providers](#)

[NSPCC guidance on safeguarding policies and procedures](#)