

Safeguarding Policy & Procedure - Bridging Barriers

Last Reviewed: 26/05/2026

Next Review Date: 26/05/2027

1. Purpose

Bridging Barriers is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, dignity, and wellbeing of all young people, volunteers, staff, mentors, trustees, and stakeholders we engage with.

This policy outlines our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment across all Bridging Barriers programmes, events, mentoring activities, digital platforms, and partnerships.

As an organisation supporting young people aged 16–25, we recognise our responsibility to safeguard:

- Children and young people under the age of 18
- Adults at risk or vulnerable adults aged 18+

We believe everybody has the right to feel safe, heard, respected, and protected from harm.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees
- Trustees
- Volunteers
- Mentors
- Contractors

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- Freelancers
- Partner organisations acting on behalf of Bridging Barriers

This policy applies across:

- 1:1 mentoring
 - Virtual sessions
 - Networking events
 - Insight days
 - Workshops and masterclasses
 - Online communication platforms
 - Social media engagement
 - All in-person and digital activities delivered by Bridging Barriers
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3. Our Commitment

Bridging Barriers is committed to:

- Creating safe environments for all participants
- Taking all safeguarding concerns seriously
- Responding appropriately and promptly to concerns or disclosures
- Ensuring safer recruitment practices are followed
- Providing safeguarding training where appropriate
- Promoting a culture of respect, inclusion, and accountability
- Protecting personal data and confidentiality appropriately
- Maintaining clear safeguarding reporting procedures
- Ensuring safeguarding considerations are embedded into programme delivery and partnerships

We have a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, neglect, exploitation, harassment, discrimination, bullying, or inappropriate behaviour.

4. Definitions

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Safeguarding

Safeguarding refers to the action taken to protect the health, wellbeing, rights, and safety of individuals, particularly children and adults at risk.

Child

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

Adult at Risk

An adult at risk is someone aged 18 or over who may be vulnerable due to personal circumstances, disability, mental health, illness, trauma, exploitation, or other factors.

Disclosure

A disclosure is when someone shares information relating to abuse, harm, neglect, exploitation, or unsafe behaviour.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

Operational Safeguarding Lead

Kevin Osei

Responsibilities include:

- Managing safeguarding concerns and incidents
- Acting as the main safeguarding contact
- Maintaining safeguarding records
- Escalating concerns where appropriate
- Ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed

Trustee Safeguarding Lead

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Sharon Dorsen

Responsibilities include:

- Providing safeguarding oversight at trustee level
- Supporting safeguarding accountability and governance
- Reviewing safeguarding risks and processes

All Staff, Volunteers & Mentors

All individuals working with Bridging Barriers are responsible for:

- Reading and following this policy
 - Maintaining professional boundaries
 - Reporting concerns immediately
 - Acting in the best interests of young people
 - Completing safeguarding training where required
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6. Safer Recruitment & DBS Checks

Bridging Barriers is committed to safer recruitment practices.

Where appropriate, this may include:

- Application and interview processes
- Reference checks
- Identity verification
- DBS checks
- Safeguarding discussions during onboarding
- Code of conduct agreements

Enhanced DBS checks may be required for individuals working directly and regularly with young people.

No volunteer or staff member should begin unsupervised regulated activity without the appropriate checks being completed where required.

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7. Safeguarding Training

Bridging Barriers aims to ensure that all staff, volunteers, and mentors with direct contact with young people receive appropriate safeguarding guidance and training.

Training may include:

- Recognising safeguarding concerns
- Professional boundaries
- Responding to disclosures
- Online safeguarding
- Reporting procedures
- Appropriate communication

Safeguarding expectations will also be covered during onboarding processes.

8. Reporting a Concern

Any safeguarding concern, disclosure, or incident should be reported immediately.

Concerns should be reported to:

Kevin Osei

Operational Safeguarding Lead

Email: info@bridgingbarriers.co.uk

If the concern involves the Operational Safeguarding Lead, concerns should be escalated to the Trustee Safeguarding Lead.

In emergency situations where somebody is at immediate risk of harm:

- Contact emergency services by calling 999
- Then notify Bridging Barriers as soon as possible

All safeguarding concerns will be treated seriously, sensitively, and confidentially where appropriate.

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9. Responding to a Disclosure

If somebody discloses a safeguarding concern:

- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Do not investigate independently
- Reassure the individual they have done the right thing
- Record factual information only
- Report the concern promptly using safeguarding procedures

Safeguarding records should be stored securely and only accessed by authorised individuals.

10. Online Safeguarding

As Bridging Barriers delivers online mentoring, events, and communication, we recognise the importance of online safeguarding.

This includes:

- Maintaining professional communication boundaries
- Using approved communication platforms where possible
- Avoiding inappropriate direct messaging or contact
- Respecting privacy and confidentiality
- Reporting online harassment, exploitation, or inappropriate behaviour
- Ensuring appropriate conduct during virtual sessions

Participants should never be subjected to abusive, discriminatory, sexual, exploitative, or inappropriate online behaviour.

11. Working with Children and Adults at Risk

Bridging Barriers works primarily with young people aged 16–25.

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We recognise that safeguarding responsibilities may differ depending on:

- Age
- Capacity
- Vulnerability
- Circumstances

For participants under 18:

- Additional safeguarding considerations apply
- Greater safeguarding responsibilities may be required

For adults at risk:

- Safeguarding responses should consider individual needs, wellbeing, dignity, and consent where appropriate

All concerns will be handled proportionately and appropriately.

12. Confidentiality & Record Keeping

Safeguarding information will be:

- Handled sensitively
- Shared only on a need-to-know basis
- Stored securely
- Retained in line with data protection requirements

Confidentiality may be breached where necessary to protect somebody from harm or where legally required.

13. Whistleblowing

Bridging Barriers encourages staff, volunteers, mentors, and stakeholders to raise concerns about unsafe, unethical, illegal, or inappropriate behaviour.

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No individual will be treated unfairly for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

Concerns may relate to:

- Poor safeguarding practice
 - Abuse or misconduct
 - Unsafe behaviour
 - Breaches of policy
 - Failure to act appropriately
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14. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
- Organisational activities change
- A safeguarding incident highlights improvements required

Bridging Barriers is committed to continuously improving safeguarding practices.



Approval & Sign-Off

Approved and signed by:

Kevin Osei BEM
Founder & CEO
Bridging Barriers

Signature: _____

Date: 26/05/2026

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