



Keeping your Members and Staff Safe

Guidance Notes for Bandmasters
and Corps Directors
Updated 2018

Introduction

As an organisation the British Youth Band Association (BYBA) is always looking to improve upon and provide guidance for the safe operation of the young people in the groups. To this end, consultation has taken place with a number of other voluntary and statutory youth organisations to produce these guidance notes.

In 1999 the then Council of BYBA devised a child protection policy statement in line with 'Safe from Harm Guidelines' issued by the Home Office in 1993. This statement was agreed by the members and is still valid today: -

As members of the British Youth Band Association we are concerned with the safety and welfare of the children and young people in our care. We seek to safeguard ALL members of the Association. It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the emotional, physical or sexual abuse of children and young people.

In November 2002 the Council of BYBA proposed that issues around safeguarding children, young people and members would be explored and these guidance notes are at the core of this document. Given many recent changes in Safeguarding practice, the document has been heavily revised in 2018.

For the purpose of this documents the following terms are used: -

Parents = parents, persons with parental responsibilities e.g. foster carers etc

Band = band and corps

Bandmaster = bandmaster and corps director

Volunteers = any member of band staff or supporters

LADO = Local Area Designated Officer

MASH = Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub

This booklet

- Sets out guidelines to safeguard the welfare of the children and young people with whom you work
- Gives strategies to help you ensure our activity is carried out in a safe environment
- Gives advice on common issues such as bullying
- Aims to protect you and other members of your staff from unfounded accusations or from behaving in ways

that may be well intentioned but inadvisable.

Children have the right to be treated with respect and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

To this end we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image, regardless of
- race, language, religion, culture, home background or ability
Help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- Always listen to children
- Enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

This policy is based on:

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

Recruitment and Selection

Ideally recruiting adults to work with your band should be carried out in a formal way. We recommend that you ask volunteers to fill out a simple application form, with references and have a brief interview. It allows you some discrimination over people turning up to help out. It is essential to always bear in mind that you cannot tell who will cause harm to a child and it may be people that you know already. There is also a chance that they may be put off working with your band if they know you have comprehensive recruitment procedures in place.

Job Descriptions

Every member of staff should have a job description of some type, these need not be formal but they should be clear.

A clear job description should include:

- The job title
- Statement of who the post-holder is responsible to

- Statement of who the post-holder is responsible for
- The job purpose
- The main duties of the post

Application Form

An application form should serve a number of purposes:

- it provides you with a name and contact details
- it gives objective information about qualifications and previous experience
- it allows the applicant to say why they think they are appropriate for the job (although if the application form is quite short – perhaps because it is aimed at volunteers – you might find this out in the interview).
- it gives names of referees

All of these provide important indicators as to a person's suitability to work with young people. At the back of this booklet, there is a template you may wish to use for an application form.

Interviews

Interviews can be fairly informal. Ideally an interview panel should have at least two people on it (an odd number is ideal in case of disagreement). People tend to make judgements about others in quite a subjective way, so if there is more than one person on the panel this can be balanced.

Criminal Record Checks – this process is still under review

With the establishment of the Criminal Records Bureau in England and Wales and the Scottish Criminal Record Office, and by using the Pre-Employment Consultancy Service in Northern Ireland, it is relatively straightforward to obtain criminal record checks and other background information on job applicants. Checks should be obtained on all volunteer staff who will be working with young people.

The highest level check available will be the one most appropriate for band – the enhanced check. It will give details of all convictions on record, plus details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings. It will also give information contained on government department lists of people considered unsuitable to work with children. Lastly, it will contain details of other information held on that individual and considered to be relevant by the local police.

Probation

A probationary period is a length of time when a person first starts in a new post during which they are provided with increased support and supervision. Giving staff a probationary period allows a band to see whether the person is right for the post, to provide them with any training that may be needed, and also to dismiss them during or at the end of the period. It also allows the member of staff to leave more easily if they decide the post is not for them.

In child protection terms, a probationary period is absolutely invaluable if used properly, because it is often not until a person is in post that you become aware of child protection concerns.

Induction

Induction is a way to ensure that all new volunteers start with a good understanding of the band and their role within it, and the best opportunity that you will ever have to familiarise staff with your policies and procedures. It is much easier to do this right from the beginning than to try to change people's working practices once they have been in post for a while. A good induction process is absolutely vital for ensuring child protection. Firstly, it will help the member of staff to understand their role and its limits and boundaries, as well as how they fit into the organisation. You could explain areas such as:

- Suspicion of abuse
- Empowering young people so that they feel confident reporting abuse

You should also advise caution when:

- Working alone with young people
- Giving lifts in your own car
- Inviting young people to your own house
- Sexual relationships with young people – inside and outside work
- Inappropriate language or behaviour with young people

It is clear from some of these points that there may be grey areas on occasion. For this reason, it is very important to discuss the Code of Conduct with volunteers when putting it together, as part of an induction programme, and in supervision meetings. Some areas should also be backed up with training.

Behaviour Policy

It is important for all bands to have a behaviour policy that is made known to children, young people and their parents. This policy should be

written in language that can be understood by all involved with the organisation. It should be reviewed regularly. The behaviour policy should include details for when an activity takes place at the organisation's premises and when children are being taken out on trips or activities.

Each band will need to think about the issues that should be covered by a behaviour policy. Such a policy need not be over-long or over-detailed. It should be realistic and should take into account children and young people's maturity and understanding.

The Behaviour Policy

A clear behaviour policy should be structured around:

- How children/young people should and should not behave to one another
- Whether children are free to leave the band at set times
- Whether children should be picked up by parents at the end of a session or are free to leave on their own
- Smoking/alcohol/drugs policy (if applicable)
- Social media, and how the organisation controls output by members, and makes members aware of the dangers they may meet
- The involvement of parents
- Sanctions that will be applied in the event that the child/young person breaks the rules of the activity (for instance, not allowed to participate, asked not to attend for a week etc.)
- A complaints mechanism, if a child/young person does not agree that they have broken the rules.

Your Role and Responsibilities

As an adult working with young people you have responsibilities towards not just the band members but also the adults working with you. It is important that common sense and safety sense is used at all times.

Everyone needs to be aware of the impact their behaviour has on the young people in their care. The trust needed between adults and the band members is fundamental to the success of your band and should not be jeopardised at any time. For this reason when working with band members it is important that you bear in mind the following points: -

1. Working with the Band Members

Whether you are the bandmaster, instructor, or occasional helper you should try to avoid situations where you are alone with a band member. If you need to speak to young person or they need to speak to you in confidence always make sure you are visible either in a quiet corner of a hall or a room with a door open. Always let the other members of the instructional staff know where you are. This precaution protects all concerned by removing the feeling of threat from an insecure participant, and by providing a witness if an accusation of improper behaviour is made.

It is important to emphasise that if the matter the person wishes to discuss is an issue of safety that you tell them that you may have to share the information with someone else.

2. Physical Contact

Common sense must prevail!

Physical contact between adults and band members should be avoided where possible but when it does occur it should be appropriate and with the band member's permission e.g. showing a young member where to place their hands on guard equipment or a musical instrument. This contact should remain impersonal so there is no risk of it being misinterpreted. Occasionally band members may approach adults and make physical contact, such as a band member who is excited by a successful competition performance - it's fine to quickly return a hug then set about occupying their mind with something else like getting ready for muster (retreat).

Remember if you have a band member with a disability there may be occasions where physical contact must be used for personal care of moving and handling. In such cases this should be discussed with them and their parents to established exactly what form this may take when they join the band and this should be outlined in a letter to the bandmaster from the parent.

3. Appropriate Language

Care should be taken about what is said and the way it is said. For example young people can be upset by sarcastic remarks said in fun. Swearing is unacceptable but it must be remembered that for some young people swearing is part of their family's everyday language. If this is the case the band member has to be dealt with in a sensitive manner e.g. "I'd rather you didn't use that language at band, shall we think of another word you could use

when you get cross?" Remember that as a role model the young person may eventually choose to follow your example and stop using the language they hear in their daily life. It is particularly important for adults not to say anything which could be interpreted as being suggestive, or containing any innuendo to a person either of the same or opposite sex.

4. Infatuation

Young people can very often become infatuated with adults that they come into regular contact with. It is important that you discourage this. If a young member does develop a 'crush' it is important that you handle this sensitively. While it is important not to encourage a 'crush' you should remember that rejection could cause damage to your relationship with the band member and possibly other members of the band. If you think someone is developing a crush speak to another instructor or supporter so that you or anyone else concerned does not have to deal with it alone. Everyone is flattered when a special interest is shown in him or her but it is important for adults working with a band to remember that they are in a 'position of trust' and that trust should not be abused.

5. Favouritism

Instructors and other supporters should avoid showing favouritism. There are times an adult finds it easier to relate to one person. But by singling them out you could create a feeling of resentment from others in the band or they could become an object of their teasing or bullying. Similarly unrealistic expectations can be created and the motive misunderstood.

6. Drinking of alcohol

It is important that adults working with young people exercise discretion regarding alcohol. You must abide by the legislation covering the legal age for drinking alcohol or any guidelines set down. You must also abide by the venue policy on the consumption of alcohol that may apply. If alcohol is available all adults should remain capable of dealing with an emergency or First Aid incident and at least two below the legal alcohol limit for driving a vehicle.

7. Taking non-prescribed drugs

Drugs can cause a variety of side effects, all of which have an impact on judgement, ability to perform routine tasks and safety in general. It is illegal to take non-prescribed drugs not sold over the counter, at any age.

8. Smoking

Research has shown the harmful effects of tobacco smoke on both smokers and non-smokers. If a person is a smoker and above the legal age for smoking they should try to ensure that smoking is undertaken in a discreet manner and in an appropriate place away from young members e.g. not in the kitchen, rehearsal area or sleeping areas. Remember to ensure that matches and cigarettes are out of reach of young members and adhere to the venue's smoking policy, food safety and fire regulations.

Parental Responsibility

When you meet the parents you should ensure the following points are covered: -

- The safety arrangements, including specified times, for parents for delivering and collecting their child at the beginning and end of band activities.
- Ensure that parents: understand that they must deliver and pick up their children punctually after band rehearsals or events. They should not bring their child early and leave them unsupervised but should check that at least two adult volunteers are present and ready to look after the band member before they leave.
- Let them know if a parent is late their child will not be left unattended. However, if parents are persistently late in collecting their child, or continually fail to collect them, this is not acceptable.
- You should ask them to inform you if there is any change to the normal drop off and collecting arrangements in particular if there is anyone who should not collect their child.
- Let them know that you will not arrange to meet or visit individual children without contacting them first.
- Ensure they inform you about any additional needs and/or medication which the young person may be taking regularly.

9. Members with Disabilities

Remember that members with disabilities or medical conditions may have different needs and you should consult with them, the parents or carer in these cases. Many disabilities are hidden and some hidden disabilities may result in challenging and/or difficult behaviour.

Behavioural management training is available via local youth work/childcare organisations and these will give you useful advice and strategies to use when dealing with challenging behaviour. Consider the number of adults you will need within the band when you have a member with additional needs – you may need extra help. Remember to review arrangements with the band member and, if appropriate, their parents/adult with parental responsibility at regular intervals to make sure the arrangements are still appropriate.

10.Data Protection

Every band holds a certain amount of information on each individual member such as name, address, date of birth etc, known as personal data. It is important that this data is held safely and with only those that need to have access to it. When the person leaves, the information should either be given back to them or destroyed by shredding.

11.Using Electronic Communication

Electronic Communication including mobile telephones, pagers, personal data analysers, computers, tablets and the worldwide web opens doors to immense amounts of information and to links with people around the world both within and outside the marching band activity.

Along with this easy access there are areas of concern.

Potential contact from someone online who may wish to harm them. Young people must be told to never give out personal details or meet alone with anyone they have contacted via the Internet. It is possible for potentially dangerous individuals to contact young people using an alias. Often young people give out information innocently and are unaware of how potentially dangerous it is.

Inappropriate content Young members could be at risk of being exposed to violent or sexually explicit material when researching electronically. There should be clear guidelines about the pictures they post on their social media sites, which may give away more information than they realise, or may attract the wrong kind of attention.

Excessive commercialism and advertising which invades a young person's privacy. Encourage the young people you have contact with to not fill in forms which ask for lots of personal details.

Generally, of course, the band members will be using electronic communication at home or at school and are, hopefully, supervised, so the

main responsibility for you is to promote good practice and keep young people safe.

Remember, band activity websites are visited by the general public and that the activity should be shown in a positive light

If you have your own website there are some things that need to be considered:

- Individuals should not be identified and where it is essential to give a contact name, only the job title should be used.
- Pictures of named individuals should not be 'posted'
- Information about meeting times and places should not be given, but should be made available only on request ideally via an anonymous email this will control the information that is given out
- If band camps and special events are being advertised, give enough detail to interest people but not enough to alert anyone who might cause a nuisance.

The Rehearsal Venue

It is important that everyone takes the responsibility to continually monitor the rehearsal to ensure it is safe for the purpose. If any repairs are needed they should be immediately reported to the owner, management committee or caretaker and you should ensure that any repairs are carried out. It is also everyone's responsibility to check the fire regulations and make sure fire drills are practised regularly with members at least once a term.

All adults must be clear about their own roles and responsibilities at unit meetings and any other activity. There is a greater risk of accidents occurring where areas of responsibility are not clearly defined and known to everyone.

Risk assessing your rehearsal venue

When using a venue for the first time there are some areas you need to consider and possibly need clarification on from the venue owners.

The first time you use a hall

Ask questions

- Where are chairs and tables kept?
- Is this safety glass in the windows and doors? (Particularly relevant to low level glass)
- Will we be the sole users of the building at the intended time?
- Who else will be on the premises?

- Whom do I contact if there is a problem?
- Are there any special requests from the owner e.g. use of equipment, fire procedures etc?
- Does it matter what shoes are worn?
- Is there a telephone available or if using a mobile is there a signal?

Each week

Ensure a member of staff arrives early. Look around the hall and check other rooms you use. Look for hazards left by previous users – ladders leaned against walls, toys on stairs, chairs stacked dangerously.

Safety at the rehearsal venue

- Are all the exits unobstructed?
- Are other people sharing the venue?
- Is it safe to play ball games or are there too many low windows?
- Is the hall/room big enough for the number of young people taking part?
- Are there side rooms and if so how will activities be monitored?
- Are there any ground rules I should set e.g. boundaries?
- Are there adequate toilet and hand washing facilities?
- Is the lighting sufficient for everyone?

Weather

When you rehearse outside ensure everyone wears clothing and footwear that is suitable for the occasion, venue and weather. Remember our climate can be very changeable and unpredictable particularly with regard to wet weather. In the case of thunderstorms take cover immediately – remember brass instruments can turn into lightning conductors!

In hot weather take regular water breaks and make sure that everyone wears sun cream suitable for their skin type (this should be provided by the parents). Hats are also an important piece of equipment.

Residential events

Before taking the band on a residential event, you should explain to parents the arrangements for supervision and sleeping. This is best done face to face at parents' meeting a few weeks prior to the event.

You must consider every aspect of the activity before putting yourself or anyone else in a

possibly vulnerable situation. Common sense and safety sense should prevail!

Sleeping arrangements

Adults and young members should have separate sleeping accommodation; so must males and females.

Distress or illness

Occasionally, a band member may be distressed or ill during the night and it may be necessary for someone to stay with them. The child and the adult must have separate beds/sleeping mats and bed linen/sleeping bags. Band leaders must use their discretion about contacting parents in situations like this, but certainly, as soon as you return from the event, the person in charge should inform the parents what the circumstances were surrounding the decision including:

- The nature of the child's distress or illness.
- Why a decision was made for an adult to be in the same room.

Transport

If parents or other volunteers are asked to transport young people to and from activities in a private vehicle, you should: -

- Ensure that drivers understand their responsibilities for the safety of the band members e.g. ensuring seatbelts are worn
- That parents know they will be travelling in other people's vehicles
- Where possible one adult should not be left alone in a car with a child who is not related to them unless it is unavoidable
- Please remember, people who have not offered to give lifts may not have appropriate insurance, MOT etc.

If the situation arises where you are alone with a band member ensure the parents know and that they give their permission if possible e.g. when taking someone, who has not been collected, to their home.

First Aid

It is good practice to ensure that at least one member of the instructional or support team has up-to-date first-aid knowledge in case any injuries such as cuts and bruises happen during an activity.

There should always be a first aid box available at the rehearsal venue and when travelling with the following suggested contents: -

Disposable protective gloves

- Adhesive dressings (blue plasters for kitchen)
- Triangular bandage(s)
- Sterile dressings-various sizes
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Antiseptic wipes (for cleaning First Aider's hands)
- Hypo allergenic tape
- Sterile eye pads
- Crepe roller bandage
- Thermometer

Remember to regularly check the contents and replace any equipment that is out of date.

If you hire a meeting place there may be first aid equipment available and you will need to check if it is suitable and, if not, you will need to provide your own.

It is also important that you are vigilant about keeping the attendance register so you know who is at the meeting in case someone goes missing, or the building has to be evacuated. **(Helpful hint:** If this happens don't forget to take the register with you which is why it is important to take a register at the start of the meeting)

Medicine: if a band member has to take any medicine during the course of a unit meeting or event make sure the parents give written consent for you or a First Aider to administer it. This can be either through writing a letter or in the case of a residential experience the use of a General Health Form.

Challenging Behaviour

Very occasionally you may witness or be directly involved with a band member, parent, member of the public or even another instructor exhibiting threatening or antisocial behaviour. It is important that you keep calm in these situations and try not to fuel the situation. It is important not to ignore the behaviour otherwise it could become worse.

This kind of behaviour could be attributed to a number of factors: -

- Personality clashes between adults and band member or band members and adults,
- Development stage of the band member,
- Parents who want the best for their child,

- Parents not understanding the band's policy and procedures,
- School pressure on band members,
- Power trips – it is so easy particularly as an instructor to say "I'm in Charge",
- Ineffective communication – failing to tell parents what is happening,
- Lack of information.

It is important to remember when you are faced with an adult or young person who is using threatening or antisocial behaviour that you: -

- consider whether the person has a special need that may influence their behaviour e.g. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Aspergers Syndrome, Dyslexia etc.
- are not in a one to one situation with them
- speak in a place where there is an escape route for both you and them i.e. don't block a doorway,
- are genuine in your approach,
- acknowledge anger or frustrations.
- use "I" language e.g. "I can see you are feeling very cross/angry/sad",
- listen
- state simply any relevant rules and boundaries,
- state quietly and calmly what, if any, action you plan to take.

Complaint Resolution

Occasionally you may receive a complaint from a member of the public or a band member.

The principles of how they are handled should be based on the following: -

- The matter should be dealt with fairly and objectively
- The matter should be dealt with within an agreed time frame
- The process should be easy to understand and use
- Support should be provided to all individuals involved

If you find yourself faced with a difficult situation then try to think about the following on the spot:

Do's

- Do stay calm
- Do listen carefully
- Do show concern
- Do ask questions
- Do explain what will

Don'ts

- Don't take it personally
- Don't interrupt
- Don't patronise
- Don't jump to conclusions
- Don't offer instant

Bullying in the Band

Occasionally a member of the band may accuse another member of the Unit of bullying them. Experts agree that the most important response should be to listen to them and trust them. Even if the scenario seems trivial, it's vital to recognise the person's distress and treat it seriously.

Young people find it very difficult to speak to an adult when they are being bullied and particularly to name the offender. It can be a huge relief for them to tell someone and to be listened to sympathetically and without judgement.

The best way to deal with bullying is often by awareness raising. Discussion of what constitutes bullying raises issues of how band members like to be treated and clarifies what behaviour is acceptable. This could form part of a discussion, which could lead to setting ground rules for band members. Involving unit members in an anti-bullying policy also gives them ownership and means they are more likely to adhere to it.

It must be remembered that bullies often have problems of their own. It is important to try and discuss the problem with them in a non-confrontational way and try and find a solution that suits all parties.

There are no quick fix solutions to bullying however through raising awareness and empathy band members can help curb something that blights many people's lives.

Remember adults too can be victims of bullies or even be the bully – the same strategy applies.

Child Protection and Disclosure

It is extremely unlikely in your role in the activity that you will experience at first hand child abuse and disclosures of child abuse but if you do it needs to be handled sensitively and well. Prepare yourself as much as you can for this situation.

You have a duty to follow through any concerns you have. You should share any concerns you have with an appropriate person if you have had to act quickly and telephone the police or social services/social work department.

Dealing with abuse disclosures from young people and adults

The number of children and adults who are abused is a small percentage of the total population, but whenever abuse occurs this is not acceptable.

Occasionally, children do abuse other children particularly verbally or physically.

If abuse is suspected

If you suspect:

a person in your band is being abused;

or

an adult who is working with the unit is an abuser,

you should consult with an appropriate person or organisation such as the NSPCC or Childline and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the Band, or in BYBA. The LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) is also to be used in these circumstances.

In a life-threatening situation, or if you personally witness an abusive act, you should inform the statutory authorities, for example the police, social services or NSPCC in the same way as any other member of the public.

The police have the power, through legislation, to prosecute adults and children who abuse.

Social services, social work departments, the police, education authorities and health services, together with other social care organisations, work together very closely to promote the welfare of children and to protect them. Try to call them in office hours unless it is a serious emergency where a child could be harmed further.

It is these groups of professional people who jointly decide if abuse has occurred and what action to take. It is not your role to diagnose abuse. The following are observable signs of possible abuse; you may find this knowledge helpful if you have any concerns.

The following list is not exhaustive and some of the observable factors may be the symptom of another causes such physical illness or disability.

Neglect

- Child looks neglected, dirty clothes, poor personal hygiene
- Dressed inappropriately for the weather, eg summer clothes in winter.
- Is failing to thrive i.e. small for their age
- Persistent diarrhoea.
- Always hungry.
- A reluctance to go home at the end of the meeting.

- Generally, never very well.

Physical abuse

- Continual appearance of bruising or injuries such as black eyes, burns in unusual places or injuries that appear inconsistent with the explanation
- Shaped bruises (like an object which is recognisable), finger marks or hand marks on the body, bite marks,
- Fractures, broken bones
- Injuries that appear inconsistent with the reasons given for their cause
- Deliberate poisoning, burns, scalds
- Fabricated illness - a child is presented with an illness that is made up by the adult in charge. Signs are exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, or inducing physical illness.

Sexual abuse

- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour or language
- A dramatic change in the child's behaviour, including withdrawal or overly outgoing
- Fear of men or wary of new adults
- They may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser
- Vaginal bleeding or discharge, and infections
- Soreness or bruising of genital areas
- FGM

Emotional abuse

- Failure to thrive.
- Aggressive or withdrawn behaviour.
- Inappropriate seeking of affection.
- Daydreaming or frozen watchfulness in one position for a long time.
- Constant complaints by the child of illness that cannot be confirmed.

It is important to remember that diagnosing abuse is a very complex area of decision-making that takes account of many issues.

It is possible your concern may be caused by something immediately observable such as a burn mark noticed during a swimming activity or general concerns may grow over a period of weeks, e.g. if a child persistently asks for food.

You must never directly challenge parents or discuss your concerns with them without first discussing them with an appropriate person or authority.

How to support an abused child

If a child talks to you about abuse by someone else, listen carefully to what the child tells you, trust what is being said is correct and:

Never agree to keep a secret. You must inform others.

Offer immediate support, understanding and reassurance, explaining that you cannot keep it a secret. Tell them 'I trust you', 'it's not your fault', 'I understand what you have told me', and 'I am going to support you'.

Do not interrogate. This sort of interviewing may prevent the police and social services/social work department from finding out, at a later date, exactly what happened.

Record all the details: child's name, child's address, age and DOB of child, date and time of the observation or disclosure, the exact words spoken by the child, the exact position and type of injuries or marks seen, the name of the person to whom the concern was reported. Sign, date and keep these.

If the situation merits immediate action then contact either the police or social services/social work department or the LADO.

Contacting the social services/social work department

The majority of social services/social work departments are easily contactable and have a social worker on duty out of normal office hours. Telephone numbers will be in the local telephone directory. They may in some cases have to be contacted through the police. The details of the LADO are equally straight forward to find. Type 'place' and 'LADO' into a search and the name and number should appear.

Alternatively you could contact a care organisation such as the NSPCC or Childline.

Providing information

Whoever you contact they will need to know what your concerns are or what has been observed. When you have concerns it is important that what you have recorded is kept confidential and is passed to the statutory authority on request.

You will need to decide if you are going to give the organisation you contact your name. If you have actually witnessed abuse and do not give your name, it is difficult for the social services/social work department to take action as you may be needed as a witness in court. If

you choose to remain anonymous then this will be respected but what is being said will still be taken seriously and will be responded to if it's felt there is sufficient grounds to do so.

If you feel you cannot cope, or are not sure, or just want support contact the NSPCC or Childline or the LADO for advice.

Keep a record of your conversation and of any advice from social services/social work department. You do not need to take any further action unless they advise you to do so.

Remember to maintain confidentiality between you and the person who discloses. Tell only those who need to know because it could affect them.

The outcome

Unless you are called as a witness in court it is unlikely that you will be told what action has been taken as a result of the referral. Social services/social work department and other agencies involved have a duty to respect the confidentiality of the child and their family.

If the person in question returns to the unit avoid asking probing questions and include them in activities as usual. If they want to tell you what happened they will. You yourself may feel you need support. Talk to your any of the recommended organisations if this is the case.

LADO: to find your local contact information, type 'place' and 'LADO' into search - your local LADO will appear in the search

NSPCC - the website has valuable information supporting organisations involved with young people

For the document Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) visit:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

Useful Contacts

NSPCC 0808 800 5000

**NSPCC for 18s or under: 0800 1111
(Childline number)**

**Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
0300 500 8090/0300 456 4546 (out of hours)**