

Borrow A Village

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Policy owner: Jen Bell, Founder and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Version: 1.0

Effective from: 1 October 2026

Review date: September 2027, or earlier following a safeguarding incident, significant change to the service or relevant legislation/guidance

Applies to: Borrow A Village childcare providers, employees, contractors and anyone acting on behalf of Borrow A Village

1. Purpose

Borrow A Village is committed to promoting the safety and wellbeing of every child whose family uses our service.

This policy explains our approach to safeguarding and child protection, the responsibilities of childcare providers working through Borrow A Village, and the action that will be taken where a safeguarding concern or allegation is raised.

For the purposes of this policy, a **child** is anyone under the age of 18.

This policy should be read alongside the Borrow A Village Provider Code of Conduct, Privacy Notice and relevant operational safeguarding procedures.

2. Our safeguarding principles

Borrow A Village believes that:

- the welfare and safety of the child is paramount;
- all children have the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm;
- concerns about a child's welfare should be taken seriously and acted upon appropriately;
- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility;
- children should be listened to and treated with dignity and respect;
- information should be shared where necessary to protect a child, while respecting confidentiality and data protection requirements;
- providers should not investigate suspected abuse themselves; and
- concerns about adults working with children must be managed promptly, fairly and with the safety of children as the priority.

Our approach is informed by current statutory safeguarding guidance, including [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

3. Scope

This policy applies to childcare arranged through Borrow A Village, including occasional babysitting, regular childcare, daytime and evening care, overnight care, nannying, event childcare and other childcare services that may be offered through the service.

It applies regardless of where the childcare takes place.

Childcare providers are expected to comply with this policy whenever they are providing childcare arranged through Borrow A Village.

4. Safeguarding responsibilities

Borrow A Village is responsible for maintaining appropriate safeguarding arrangements for its service, including:

- vetting and onboarding providers;
- providing safeguarding guidance;
- maintaining a clear route for reporting concerns;
- responding appropriately when concerns are raised;
- keeping appropriate safeguarding records;
- seeking advice from or making referrals to statutory agencies where appropriate; and
- reviewing safeguarding arrangements as the service develops.

Childcare providers are responsible for:

- prioritising the safety and wellbeing of children in their care;
- following this policy and the Provider Code of Conduct;
- remaining alert to potential safeguarding concerns;
- responding appropriately if a child discloses something to them;
- reporting concerns promptly;
- cooperating with safeguarding enquiries where required; and
- maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Borrow A Village is:

Jen Bell

Founder, Borrow A Village

Email: safeguarding@borrowavillage.co.uk

Telephone: 07955 031986

The DSL is responsible for receiving and assessing safeguarding concerns, maintaining safeguarding records, seeking specialist advice where required, making or supporting referrals to relevant agencies and ensuring appropriate follow-up.

Borrow A Village will establish appropriate cover for safeguarding matters when the DSL is unavailable and will appoint a deputy or alternative safeguarding contact as the service develops.

A lack of availability from the DSL must never delay emergency action or a necessary referral to statutory services.

6. Recognising safeguarding concerns

Safeguarding concerns can arise in many different ways. They may relate to physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation, domestic abuse, online harm or other circumstances affecting a child's safety or wellbeing.

Providers are **not expected to determine whether abuse has taken place.**

A concern may arise because of:

- something a child says;
- an injury or change in behaviour;
- something the provider observes in the home or elsewhere;
- the behaviour of a parent, carer or another adult;
- information received from somebody else; or
- a provider's professional judgement that something does not feel right.

A provider should report a concern even where they do not have proof.

7. Responding to a disclosure from a child

If a child says something that may indicate that they or another child is being harmed, the provider should:

- remain calm and listen;
- allow the child to speak in their own words;
- take what the child says seriously;
- reassure the child that they were right to speak up;
- not promise confidentiality or secrecy;
- explain, in an age-appropriate way, that they may need to tell someone who can help;
- avoid leading, suggestive or unnecessary questions;
- not attempt to investigate the allegation;
- not confront the person who may be responsible; and
- make an accurate factual record as soon as possible.

Where possible, the child's own words should be recorded.

8. Immediate danger or medical emergency

If a child is in immediate danger, requires urgent medical attention or a serious crime is taking place, the provider must contact the emergency services by calling **999**.

The provider should then contact the DSL/Borrow A Village as soon as it is safe and practicable to do so.

Emergency action must **never be delayed while waiting for a response from Borrow A Village**.

9. Reporting a safeguarding concern

Safeguarding concerns should be reported to the Borrow A Village DSL **as soon as possible**. Providers should use:

Safeguarding email: safeguarding@borrowavillage.co.uk

Urgent safeguarding telephone: 07955 031986

If the provider cannot reach Borrow A Village and believes a child may be at serious risk, they should contact the relevant local authority children's social care service or police directly.

The DSL should be informed afterwards as soon as practicable.

10. Recording concerns

Safeguarding records should be factual and distinguish clearly between:

- what was observed;
- what was said;
- information provided by another person; and
- professional opinion or interpretation.

Records should include, where relevant:

- the child's name and age;
- the booking/family concerned;
- date, time and location;
- the nature of the concern;
- what was observed;
- the child's exact words where possible;
- what the provider said or did;
- details of any immediate action taken;
- who was contacted and when; and
- the name of the person making the record.

Records should be made as soon as possible while events are fresh in the person's memory.

11. What Borrow A Village will do when a concern is reported

The DSL will consider:

1. whether the child or anyone else is in immediate danger;
2. whether emergency services are required;
3. what information is known and whether any immediate protective action is required;
4. whether advice should be sought from children's social care or another safeguarding agency;
5. whether a referral should be made to children's social care and/or police;
6. whether and when the child's parent or carer should be informed;
7. whether the concern involves a BAV provider or another adult working with children and therefore requires consideration under the allegations/LADO process;
8. whether any other authority or organisation needs to be informed; and
9. what follow-up and records are required.

Borrow A Village will **not attempt to conduct a child-protection investigation itself** where this should properly be undertaken by statutory agencies.

12. Informing parents and carers

In most circumstances it will be appropriate to communicate openly with parents or carers about issues concerning their child.

However, a parent or carer should **not automatically be informed of a safeguarding concern** where doing so could:

- place the child or another person at increased risk;
- prejudice a police or social-care investigation;
- lead to evidence being destroyed or altered; or
- otherwise undermine action intended to protect the child.

Where there is uncertainty, the DSL should seek advice from children's social care or another appropriate safeguarding professional before informing the parent.

13. Allegations or concerns about a childcare provider

Any allegation that a Borrow A Village provider has harmed a child, may have harmed a child, may pose a risk of harm, or may otherwise be unsuitable to work with children will be taken seriously.

Providers must not investigate allegations against another provider themselves.

Where an allegation or serious concern is received, Borrow A Village will consider whether the provider should be made **temporarily unavailable for new bookings while the concern is assessed**.

This is a precautionary safeguarding measure and does not imply that an allegation has been substantiated.

The DSL will consider the appropriate external safeguarding route, including whether the matter should be referred to:

- children's social care;
- police;
- the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO); and/or
- another relevant regulator, employer or professional body.

Current statutory guidance provides for local authorities to oversee allegations concerning adults working with children and says relevant allegations should be brought to the designated officer/team without delay, with the LADO informed within one working day.

Borrow A Village will not undertake an internal investigation where doing so could interfere with a police, children's social care or LADO process.

14. DBS referrals

Borrow A Village will consider whether a safeguarding matter triggers a duty or otherwise warrants a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

This is particularly important where a person has been removed - or would have been removed had they not left - from regulated activity because they harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child or met other relevant statutory criteria.

The legal duty depends partly on BAV's status and role in relation to regulated activity in the particular circumstances. Where necessary, Borrow A Village will obtain appropriate advice rather than assuming that a referral is or is not required.

Current DBS guidance states that regulated activity providers and personnel suppliers have a legal duty to make a referral where the statutory conditions are met, and this duty can apply even where the matter has also been referred to a local authority or professional regulator.

15. Professional boundaries and conduct

Providers must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and families. Providers must not:

- use physical punishment;
- use degrading, intimidating, threatening or humiliating behaviour;
- engage in inappropriate physical or sexual contact;

- make sexualised or otherwise inappropriate comments to or around children;
- consume alcohol or recreational drugs while responsible for children;
- smoke or vape while caring for children;
- take photographs or recordings of children without the parent's express agreement;
- share photographs, recordings or information about children or families on personal social media;
- invite another person into a family's home without prior agreement;
- leave children with an unauthorised person; or
- use information learned through a booking for an inappropriate purpose.

Any concerns about appropriate boundaries should be raised with Borrow A Village.

16. Accidents and incidents

Providers should take reasonable steps to prevent accidents and should follow information supplied by the family regarding medical conditions, allergies and other relevant needs. In an emergency, providers should call 999 where appropriate and then notify the parent/carer and Borrow A Village.

Significant accidents, injuries and incidents should be reported to Borrow A Village so that an appropriate record can be maintained and any necessary follow-up undertaken.

Accident/incident reporting does not replace safeguarding reporting where there is also a concern about abuse, neglect or another risk of harm.

17. Confidentiality and information sharing

Safeguarding information will be handled sensitively and shared only where there is a legitimate need to know or where sharing is necessary to protect a child, comply with the law or support an appropriate safeguarding process.

Providers must not discuss safeguarding concerns with friends, other families, other providers or other people who do not need the information.

Safeguarding information may need to be shared with children's social care, police, LADO, DBS or other relevant bodies where appropriate.

A request for confidentiality from a child or adult cannot prevent information being shared where this is necessary to protect a child.

18. Safeguarding records

Borrow A Village will maintain safeguarding records separately from ordinary provider and booking information wherever practicable.

Access will be restricted to those who need the information for safeguarding purposes.

Records will include concerns raised, information received, advice sought, referrals made, actions taken, decisions reached and the reasons for those decisions.

Safeguarding information will be retained securely and for an appropriate period having regard to the nature of the concern, potential future safeguarding relevance and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

19. Safer provider onboarding

Borrow A Village's provider onboarding and vetting arrangements may include, as appropriate:

- identity verification;
- DBS/background checks appropriate to the provider's role and legal eligibility;
- references;
- confirmation of relevant experience and qualifications;
- First Aid requirements;
- safeguarding awareness/training;
- a provider interview/onboarding conversation; and
- acceptance of BAV policies and standards.

No single check should be regarded as a substitute for appropriate safeguarding practices.

The appropriate level of DBS check depends upon the role and activities being undertaken. Current DBS guidance confirms that changes in activities or frequency can affect whether work constitutes regulated activity and what level of check is applicable.

20. Training

The Borrow A Village DSL will undertake appropriate safeguarding training and keep their knowledge up to date.

Providers will be expected to understand their safeguarding responsibilities and to complete any safeguarding training specified by Borrow A Village as a condition of providing childcare through the service.

Safeguarding information and guidance will be made available through Provider Resources.

21. Whistleblowing and raising concerns about Borrow A Village

Providers should raise any safeguarding concern about the conduct of another provider or somebody acting on behalf of Borrow A Village.

If a concern relates to the DSL, or a provider believes that a concern has not been handled appropriately by Borrow A Village, they should not allow the absence of an internal route to prevent them from reporting it.

They may contact the relevant local authority children's social care service, LADO or police directly where appropriate.

22. Review and governance

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where:

- legislation or statutory guidance changes;
- Borrow A Village materially changes the services it offers;
- BAV expands into new types of childcare provision;
- a safeguarding incident identifies an improvement;
- relevant advice from a safeguarding authority changes; or
- a change to BAV's operating model affects its safeguarding responsibilities.

Changes will be communicated to providers where relevant.