

Safeguarding Children

Guidance for Tower Hamlets EBP Volunteers

Who should read this guidance?

This guidance is principally intended for volunteers managed by Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership (THEBP) staff who are likely to have regular contact with children through their volunteering work.

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as protecting children from maltreatment and preventing impairment of children's health or development. Safeguarding ensures that children can grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

THEBP is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in its work with children and young people. THEBP has a duty of care to ensure the well-being of everyone who participates in its activities and to safeguard those who are particularly vulnerable.

The [THEBP Safeguarding Policy and Procedures](#) gives clear procedures on responding to concerns regarding the safeguarding and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Combined with the associated procedures and guidance, the Policy provides a structure for volunteers that may come across concerns within the context of their work. This guidance note gives summary information on the volunteers' role under the Policy and all volunteers are advised to read the full Policy.

Other definitions

A **child** is defined as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. Children therefore means '**children and young people**'.

A **vulnerable adult** is someone 18 or over who is unable to care independently for themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. This could be due to a physical or learning disability, illness or injury or mental health issues; old age; substance addiction; domestic violence or abuse or other reasons. It can be a temporary or a permanent condition.

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare, and refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm.

What volunteers need to do:

- **Know your role and responsibilities in relation to young people.** Your THEBP contact will ensure that you have the relevant information and are clear about your role in relation to the safeguarding of children.
- All volunteers likely to have regular contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults are required to undergo a **Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check**. This will be arranged by the THEBP Team before you begin volunteering.
- **Maintain professional boundaries at all times.** Avoid placing yourself into situations where your actions may be misinterpreted. Volunteers shouldn't spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others, take young people alone on car journeys, or undertake any home visits.
- **Use THEBP procedure for reporting concerns.** Volunteers are not expected to be experts in recognition; however all adults working within THEBP have a duty of care to be vigilant and respond appropriately to suspicions of poor practice, abuse or bullying. This does not mean that it is your responsibility to decide if a situation is poor practice, abuse or bullying, but it is your responsibility to report your concerns. See the flowchart with relevant steps below.
- **In an emergency and where there is immediate risk to a child or young person ACT!** It is essential to avoid delay as inaction may place the child at further risk. Inform your THEBP contact/school contact as soon as possible, who will in turn contact the Safeguarding Team. If contact cannot be made appropriate action should be undertaken e.g. contact police.

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Reporting allegations against an adult/concerns about abuse

