

## SAFE COMMISSIONING – BSCP MINIMUM EXPECTATIONS

The Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Supporting commissioners and contractors of services to maintain a ‘Safeguarding First’ approach, the BSCP has developed this set of minimum standards for Safe Commissioning. These should always be considered PRIOR to engaging any external services.

The standards apply to all organisations that commission or decommission external services for children and young people and all relevant contracts / specifications.

All organisations should:

1. Ensure externally commissioned organisations have completed a BSCP Self-Assessment<sup>1</sup> and Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are continuing to engage in the Self-Assessment processes at intervals agreed by the BSCP.
2. Have a **standard safeguarding clause within the contract** that includes:
  - An explicit reference to safeguarding children and young people.
  - An explicit reference to the overarching legislation (Children Act 1989 and 2004, Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2023), The [London Child Protection Procedures](#), DBS checks: Guidance for Employers, and BSCP guidance relating to safeguarding)
  - Adherence to the BSCP safer recruitment minimum standards.
  - A requirement for a safeguarding and child protection policy to be in place that adheres to the standards set out within the BSCP’s policy guidance.
  - A requirement for there to be a whistleblowing policy in place.
  - An expectation of safeguarding induction and continued training for staff and volunteers.
  - An expectation that key messages from the BSCP, including lessons identified through [Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews](#), audits and other processes are effectively cascaded to all staff.
  - The role of the provider in ensuring its staff are alert to the signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect and know what to do if they are worried about a child. This must include specific reference to extra-familial harm such as child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.
  - The role of the provider in complying with the BSCP’s safeguarding arrangements to report and respond to safeguarding concerns and co-operate with safeguarding enquiries.
  - Expectations for responding to [allegations against staff and volunteers](#) and cooperation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
3. Enable contractors and sub-contractors to **receive BSCP information, briefings, updates and participate in [BSCP training](#)**.
4. Record the **DBS numbers and DBS expiry dates for staff within contracted services** who work directly with, or have regular contact with, children and young people based on levels of contact. (Note: directly employed staff must follow the full recruitment standards)
5. Evidence adherence to the above standards through **robust performance management and a good quality assurance framework** of commissioned services on a regular basis. This should include safeguarding discussions at each contract monitoring meeting and safeguarding metrics included within the contract.
6. Undertake **thematic checks** as part of the quality assurance process to ensure these standards are met. The regularity and mechanisms for these checks should be considered using a risk-based approach.

<sup>1</sup> This could be a requirement to complete a BSCP Self-Assessment audit and Child Safeguarding Statement at the tender stage or through use of a recent audit. Please contact [bscp@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:bscp@bromley.gov.uk) for support.