



ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Lead: Deborah Saw, Operations Manager
Deputy: Anna-Clare Temple, Chief Executive
Previous Updates: Jul 2019, Jul 2020
Version: 3.5
Date Issued: 22 Feb 2021
Date of Next Review: Jul 2021

Adult Safeguarding Policy



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Adult Safeguarding Policy Statement

WE RECOGNISE that the welfare of adults at risk is paramount and that they have equal rights of protection. We have a duty of care when they are in our charge and will do everything we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities.

WE WILL:

- ✓ treat all adults at risk with respect and celebrate their achievements
- ✓ carefully recruit and select all staff whether paid or unpaid
- ✓ respond to concerns and allegations appropriately
- ✓ adopt the recommendations of the SAFE toolkit

We also recognise

WHEN THERE ARE CONCERNS about the welfare of any adult at risk *all responsible adults* in our organisation are expected to share those concerns with the Lead for Adult Safeguarding.

The Lead is responsible for:

- ✓ monitoring and recording concerns
- ✓ making referrals to social care services without delay
- ✓ liaison with other agencies
- ✓ arranging training for all staff

Their role is also to oversee and ensure that our Adult Safeguarding Policy is fully implemented and that we attain SAFE standards. These details will be made available to all responsible adults, adults at risk and parents/carers by training, staff handbook and enrolment information. This includes ensuring they and all staff receive appropriate Adult Safeguarding training. The Deputy should be available to support or cover for the nominated Lead and handle any complaints or allegations against the nominated Lead if appropriate.

Equal Opportunities

We recognise that anyone can become subject to discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of age, culture, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief.

Comments and actions that contribute to discrimination, harassment or victimisation are not acceptable and will be challenged. Such incidents will be recorded and shared with parents and carers, and the relevant agencies when necessary and appropriate.

Confidentiality

In cases of disclosure of abuse by adults at risk, parents or carers, we are obliged to share the information and will refer our concerns to social care services, or the police in an emergency.



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Staff Allegations

Concerns about the behaviour of responsible adults in the organisation will be referred without delay to the lead for adult safeguarding who will contact social care services, or the police, if a crime may have been committed.

In the rare situations that the concerns are about the Lead for Adult Safeguarding, it is important to refer to the Deputy. This may not be appropriate, in which case any member may personally refer direct to the designated Adult Safeguarding Manager (or local equivalent) who will liaise with Social Care Services, or the Police, if a crime may have been committed.

Adult Safeguarding Policy (Full)

Definition of Adult Safeguarding

The safeguarding of adults at risk is of paramount importance. It continues to attract high media attention, especially when there is a safeguarding adult at risk incident within an organisation.

Government guidance consistently stresses that the welfare of adults at risk is the corporate responsibility of the local authority in partnership with public, private and voluntary organisations.

The legal definition of the term "*adult at risk*" refers to any person aged 18 years and over (16 in Scotland) who:

- has needs for care and support and;
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse and neglect and;
- as a result of those care needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

This could include people with mental health issues, physical, sensory or learning disabilities, medical conditions, dementia, brain injury, those who are elderly and frail and also those who are family carers.

Safeguarding concerns arise when an adult who has care and support needs and is, or is at risk of, being abused or neglected and unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or risk of it because of those needs (see [Care and support statutory guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442423/care_and_support_statutory_guidance.pdf))

Please see references on the [SAFE website](#) for details of arrangements in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Wales and Scotland.

Government guidance is clear that all organisations working with adults at risk, families, parents and carers have responsibilities. It is important to remember that adults at risk can also abuse and that such incidents fall into the remit of this policy.



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The Care Act 2014 has six key principles which should inform the way in which all of the workforce should work with adults. They are:

1. Empowerment
2. Prevent
3. Proportionality
4. Protection
5. Partnership
6. Accountability

Recognising Abuse

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance Issued under the Care Act 2014 outlines how abuse may take many forms and how individual circumstances should be considered. Exploitation is a particular theme in the following list of abuse:

- Physical
- Domestic violence (inc. "honour" based violence)
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory
- Organisational or institutional
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Hate and "mate" crime

Mental Capacity

We fully recognise and uphold the 5 key principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in all aspects of our work by:

- Presuming each adult at risk has capacity
- Supporting individuals to make their own decisions
- Recognising the right for individuals to make their own decisions, even if they appear eccentric
- Making sure what we do for adults at risk (without capacity) is in their best interest
- Making sure that anything we do is the least restrictive action for the individual



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Treating Adults with Respect

We endeavour to treat all adults at risk with respect, regardless of ability or culture. We ensure that everyone signs up to the SAFE Adult's Code of Conduct.

We also circulate and make available to everyone by training, staff handbook and enrolment information, our confidentiality statement, complaints procedures, allegations and "whistleblowing" statements and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Celebrating Adults' Achievements

We positively encourage all adults at risk to succeed and celebrate their achievements by awarding certificates of achievement where appropriate and issuing achievement packs once adults have finished working with Step Together staff.

We are particularly sensitive to the needs of adults at risk who may achieve in smaller steps than their peers but are equally entitled to celebration.

Safer Recruitment

We adhere to the local Safeguarding Adults Board's Key Standards for Recruitment, Care Quality Commission (CQC), (if applicable) and SAFE guidelines for recruiting all staff, paid or unpaid by obtaining full personal details and application forms (not CV's) with particular relevance to previous work with adults at risk.

Our shortlisting and interview process is conducted fairly, in line with equal opportunities and we log outcomes and scores to evidence that the applicant is appropriate and suitable for the role.

All offers of employment are subject to two a minimum of two satisfactory written references and insist that any appointment, where staff have direct and/or unsupervised access to adults at risk, will only be confirmed subject to a satisfactory Disclosure & Barring (DBS) check and a check against the Barred Adults List, where eligible.

Staff Induction and Training

In line with SAFE recommendations, we have a clear induction and training strategy detailing clear job descriptions and responsibilities and all relevant procedures as detailed under "*Treating Adults with Respect*".

All new staff are asked to sign and record they have received and understood the "Good Practice" leaflet and those with direct contact with adults at risk, or managers, will attend SAFE safeguarding training within 3 months of appointment. We also agree a 3-month probation with clear goals and then provide supervision and appraisals at regular intervals of 6 months with the Operations Manager or Chief Executive.



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Staff will undertake the free online government training for PREVENT/Channel and FGM as well as other training which will support them in their role such as suicide awareness, trauma and/or ASIST training.

Confidentiality

We have a clear policy in line with SAFE recommendations about confidentiality and information sharing and these details will be made available to all responsible adults, adults at risk, parents and carers (when relevant) by training, staff handbook and enrolment information. In addition to this, we are mindful and respectful of the privacy of individuals and, in particular, their personal data in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (2018).

We fully endorse the principle that the welfare of adults at risk override any obligations of confidence we may hold to others. Individual cases will only be shared or discussed on a “need to know” basis. Under “whistleblowing”, anyone in our organisation may refer direct to either Adult Social Care Services or the Police if they are concerned that an adult is at risk of harm and this policy is not being adhered to.

All media enquiries will be handled by Operations Manager or the Chief Executive.

Handling Disclosures

If you are concerned about an adult at risk, it is important that this information is communicated to the Lead or Deputy for Adult Safeguarding. A disclosure may be made verbally or communicated through play or behaviour by an adult at risk, or another adult in the organisation and it is important for everyone to remember the following:

You may become aware of suspected or likely abuse by:

- Your own observations and concerns
- Being told by another person that they have concerns about an adult at risk
- The adult at risk tells you
- The abuser tells you

Also remember that you may not always be working directly with the adult at risk but become concerned because of difficulties experienced by other adults, for example:

- Domestic violence incidents
- Mental health issues
- Substance and alcohol abuse incidents
- Radicalisation
- FGM

Remember:

- Do not delay
- Do not investigate



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- Seek advice from the Lead or Deputy for Adult Safeguarding
- Make careful recording of anything you observe or are told

Responding to Concerns

We ensure and emphasise that everyone in our organisation understands and knows how to share any concerns immediately with the Adult Safeguarding Lead and Deputy. We do this by training, staff handbook and enrolment information.

Everyone including both the Lead and Deputy for Adult Safeguarding will deal with concerns by taking the following steps:

Step 1

If you are worried a vulnerable adult has been abused because:

- You have seen something
- An adult says they have been abused
- Somebody else has told you they are concerned
- There has been an allegation against a member of staff
- There has been an anonymous allegation
- An adult has disclosed they are abusing an adult at risk
- An adult at risk has disclosed they have been abused

Important: Any consultation should not delay a referral. In an emergency dial 999

**Consult
Monitor & Record
(Sign/date/time)**

Step 2 (within 24 hrs)

Refer to the adult safeguarding policy.
Talk to the Lead for adult safeguarding and/or their Deputy

Step 3

S/he (or anyone else if not available) should refer the concern to Social Care Services and/or the police (in an emergency) and follow up the referral in writing within 24 hours**.

*** In cases of allegations against a person with a "duty of care", the Designated Adult Safeguarding Manager (ASM) or local equivalent will co-ordinate the next procedural steps.*

Allegations / Complaints / Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures

We have clear policies in line with SAFE recommendations about handling allegations, dealing with complaints and our own disciplinary and grievance procedures and these details will be made available to all adults, adults at risk, parents and carers, as necessary, by training, staff handbook and enrolment information.

We are mindful that the three procedures may confuse the next appropriate steps to take. We are clear that, in any case where a complaint has been made with regards to any inappropriate or poor practice, we will discuss the situation with local authority Designated Adult Safeguarding Manager and/or Social Care Services before making an open decision about the best way forward.



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It is the responsibility of the Lead and/or Deputy for Adult Safeguarding to ensure that these procedures are rigorously adhered to. In the case that the Lead is implicated, the Deputy should be informed. In the exceptional circumstances that both are involved, it is the duty of the person concerned to contact Social Care Services direct, or the Police if a crime has, or may have been, committed under “Whistleblowing”.

Social Care Services will manage any investigations, overseen by the local designated Adult Safeguarding Manager (or local equivalent) in accordance with local Safeguarding Adults Board procedures. These are available on the local Safeguarding Adults Board website.

With regards to disciplinary and grievance procedures, we are very clear that we will take no steps until we have fully discussed and agreed a strategy with the designated Adult Safeguarding Manager, Social Care Services and/or the Police. Any investigation will override the need to implement any such procedures.

Record Keeping

All paper records will be securely kept in a locked, fireproof cabinet / drawer by the Step Together Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy unless they have been shared electronically or via secure cloud-based systems (in this instance any documentation will be deleted from the cloud once received). All electronic records will be password protected and stored securely. Only the Lead and/or Deputy for Adult Safeguarding will have access and records will only be kept for as long as necessary.

A log of all safeguarding incidents will be maintained by the Safeguarding Lead to ensure each and every individual case is dealt with appropriately and in line with this policy.

Where a safeguarding risk is reported, these records will be shared with Social Care Services as soon as possible. Staff are required to write up a written report within 24 hours of raising a concern with the Lead and/or Deputy onto the Charity’s secure case management system and all content will be factual and non-judgemental. The report should be signed, with a date and time of filing the report.

Where reports cannot be added electronically to the case management system, a typed report onto letterhead is acceptable but it is important to record details of the adult at risk, along with a date and time, the staff member’s name and job role. It is equally important to record the reasons for making the decision not to refer to Social Care Services as when the decision is taken to refer.

SAFE Recommendations

In order to attain and retain our SAFE award, everybody needs to be vigilant in adhering to this policy and also assessing the risks of their own work and activities. These risk assessments will be carried out annually by the adult at risk protection Lead and/or Deputy. However, it is the responsibility of everyone to draw attention to practices and procedures that they are unhappy or uncomfortable with.



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We all have a duty of care to our clients and it is only through adopting SAFE policies and practices that we can all be confident we have done everything we can to safeguard the adults at risk in our care.

General Policy Note

This policy was agreed and disseminated on 17/01/2017 and will be reviewed annually or when there are substantial organisational or legislative changes. A separate record for staff signatures will be maintained to evidence that they have read and understood their responsibilities around Adult Safeguarding.

Relevant Legislation

- The Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Health & Social Care Act 2012
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

Safeguarding Contacts

Adult Safeguarding Lead

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