



Last updated: 01/01/2023

Safeguarding Policy Statement

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As adults and/or professionals or volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – and in particular protecting them from significant harm - depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Individual children, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, children's social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including youth justice services.

For those children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote welfare of the child(ren) and – where necessary – to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children. All agencies and professionals should:

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances;
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans; and
- work co-operatively with parents unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.

Definitions of abuse and neglect:

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (eg: rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Financial

Financial abuse involves a perpetrator using or misusing money which limits and controls the individuals current and future actions and their freedom of choice. It can include using credit cards without permission and withdrawing money without their knowledge. Financial abusers can be from family members to care staff

Volunteer awareness

All Volunteers will be made aware of this policy as part of their initial induction process and there will be regular briefings and updates for all Volunteers

Where necessary or possible, Volunteers will be encouraged to attend appropriate training courses.

Reviewing the Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure will be reviewed every year, this will include checking telephone numbers, accuracy of personnel details, and any updates required by a change in local or national policy.



Procedures

What to do if you have concerns about a child

You may have concerns about a child because of something you have seen or heard, or a child may choose to disclose something to you. If a child discloses information to you, you should:

- Do not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to share this information and refer to Children's Social Care Services.
- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said.
- Reassure the child, but only as far as is honest, don't make promises you may not be able to keep *eg: 'Everything will be alright now', 'You'll never have to see that person again'.*
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it. For example, you could say, *'You're not to blame'.*
- Do not interrogate the child; it is not your responsibility to investigate.
- Do not ask leading questions (*eg: Did he touch your private parts?*), ask open questions such as *'Anything else to tell me?'*
- Do not ask the child to repeat the information for another Volunteer.
- Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
- Take notes if possible or write up your conversation as soon as possible afterwards.
- Record the date, time, place any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not paraphrase).
- Record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.

Whatever the nature of your concerns, discuss them with your Safeguarding officer. See the diagram on the next page for the process to follow.

If you still have concerns, you or the safeguarding officer should refer to:

Wiltshire Council – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Number	Office Hrs	Monday - Thursday 8.45am - 5pm	Friday 8.45am - 4pm
	Out of Hours	Monday to Thursday 5.00pm - midnight	Friday 4pm - midnight
	Weekends / Bank Holidays 9am - midnight		

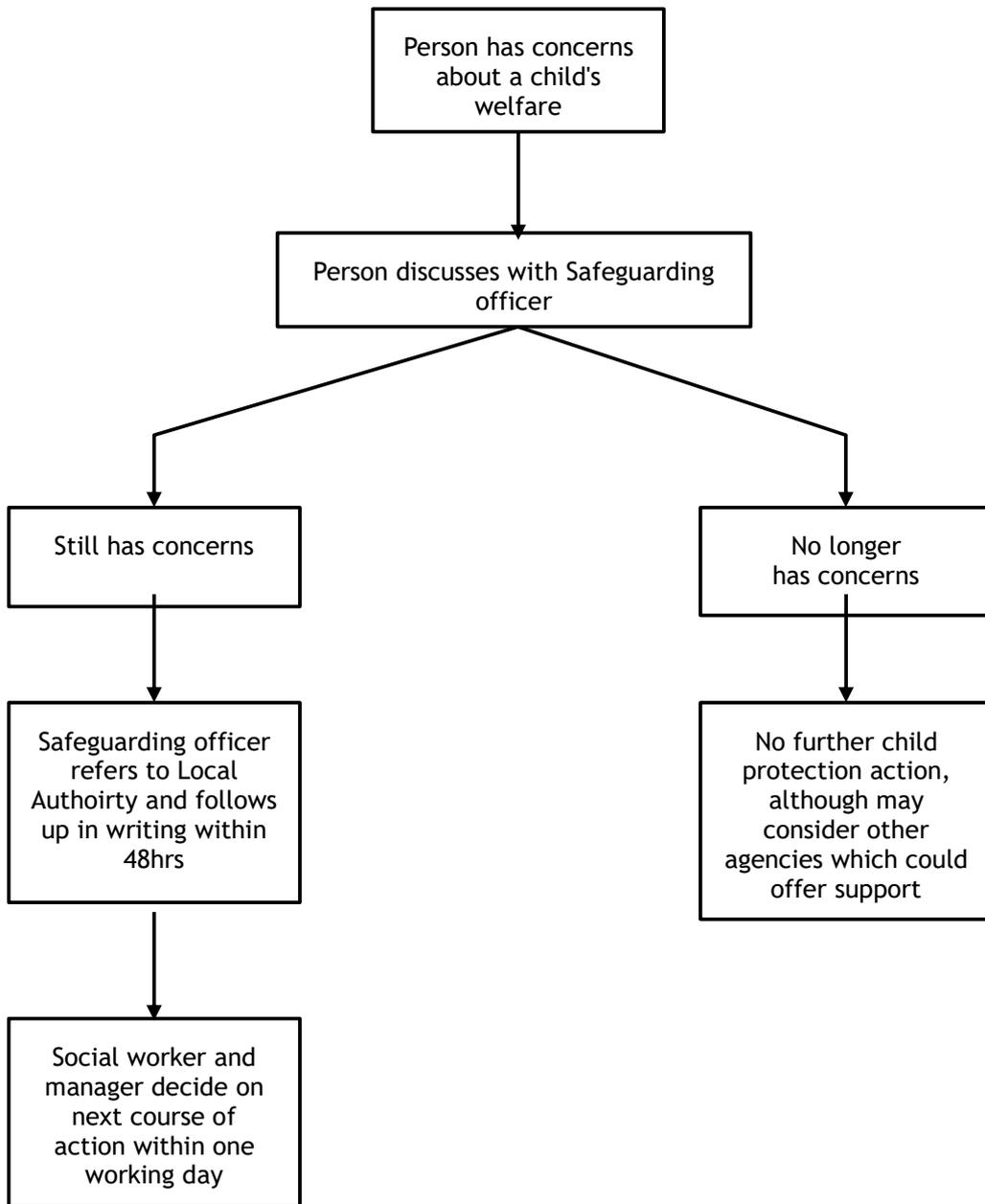
Phones are diverted to the Social Work Standby Service from midnight - 9am (7 days a week)

What information will you need when making a referral?

You will be asked to provide as much information as possible. Such as the child's full name, date of birth, address, school, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the child may have, details of the parents. Do not be concerned if you do not have all these details, you should still make the call.

It is recommended you should follow up the verbal referral in writing, within 48hr

Process Chart Where There Are Concerns About A Child's Welfare



We will seek to keep children and Adults safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people, a deputy and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting and selecting volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against the volunteers appropriately
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
 - Ensuring all riders are suitably assessed, including Health, weight, height to match the requirements for animal welfare as well as including the safety of walkers and leaders

E- Safety

the online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however, it can also present risks and challenges. we have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online. we have a responsibility to help keep children and young people safe online whether they are using RDA's network and devices

RDA aims to promote E safety by:

- Supporting, encouraging and demonstrating the use of electronic communications in a way that keeps everyone safe and demonstrates respect as we would face to face.
- Supporting and encouraging parents and carers to do what they can to keep their children and vulnerable people safe when online or using a mobile phone
- Informing Parents and caregivers of incidents of concerns as appropriate, dealing firmly yet fairly and decisively with any examples of inappropriate use.
- Ensuring any images taken within RDA are used only after permission has been obtained and for the purpose consent was given
- Volunteers will sign an E safety contract in regard to code of conduct online.

Contact Details

Nominated Child protection and Safeguard Lead

Name: Donna Turnbull

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Deputy Nominated Child Protection and Safeguard Lead

Name: Kady Chatman

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email: saxonrdachair@gmail.com

Allegations Involving a Members of Volunteer

RDA is committed to having effective recruitment procedures, including checking all volunteers to make sure they are safe to work with children and young people. Where appropriate, key volunteers will undertake safeguarding Training.

However, there may still be occasions when there is an allegation against a volunteer. Allegations against those who work with children, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, cover a wide range of circumstances

All allegations of abuse of children by those who work with children or care for them must be taken seriously. All reports of allegations must be submitted within one working day to Safeguarding officer

The following procedure should be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way which has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates that he/she is unsuitable to work with children.

The allegations may relate to the persons behaviour at work, at home or in another setting.

The Safeguarding Officer will discuss the matter to determine what steps should be taken and where necessary obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence/information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded, whether a referral to Wiltshire council and/or whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

Some allegations will be so serious as to require immediate referral to Wiltshire Council along with the Police, but common sense and judgement must be applied in reaching a decision about what action to take.

If the allegation is not patently false and there is caused to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm, the safeguarding Officer will immediately refer the matter to the local authority and ask for a Strategy Discussion to be convened straight away.

Some allegations may be less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by Wiltshire Council. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organization. Consequently, the safeguarding officer should be informed of all allegations that come to the employer's attention and appear to come within the scope of this procedure so that he or she can consult Police and social care colleagues as appropriate.

Where such allegations are made, consideration must be given to the following three strands:

- 1: The police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- 2: Enquiries and assessment by Children's Social Care Services as to whether the child is need of protection or in need of services;
- 3: Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.



Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England/Northern Ireland/Scotland/Wales.

- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- The Police Act 1997
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1994 and 1998
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2003
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- The Care Act 2014, - implemented March 2015
- Information Sharing Advice - March 2015
- The Equality Act 2010
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012
- Procedures set out by the local Safeguarding adult Boards

We recognise that:

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England/Northern Ireland/Scotland/Wales

- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare



Change Record

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
dd/mm/yy	XX	



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