



Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy



We
inspire
growth

We
prioritise
kindness

We
achieve
together

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Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy

There are no significant changes to this policy

Section	From	To	Date	Reason	By

POLICY APPROVED BY

Name:	JAN PEEK
Signed (Chair):	<i>Jan Peek</i>
Date:	20/3/24
Review Date:	March '25

1 Introduction

1.1 Policy Statement

Home-Start is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all who use its service. We recognise that we have a responsibility to protect the welfare of adults at risk through our support for families and to ensure they are protected from harm. Home-Start has no statutory remit or role to investigate but acknowledges a responsibility to pass on to the appropriate statutory agency concerns in relation to the safety or welfare of an adult at risk of harm so that these concerns can be assessed.

Where there are concerns about the safety or welfare of an adult at risk this policy and these procedures will be followed and information will be shared with the relevant agencies in order to protect them.

1.2 Scope of the Policy

This document sets out the responsibilities of all those who work for Home-Start, including trustees, employees, volunteers, consultants, self-employed contractors, agency staff, students and those working pro bono for Home-Start (these will be referred to throughout the policy as 'staff').

This policy outlines the shared responsibility we have across Home-Start to protecting adults at risk that we encounter and work with. This is the overarching policy regardless of where in the UK your Home-Start is located.

1.3 Legal Aspects

The practices and procedures within this policy are based on the principles contained within UK legislation and Government Guidance and take the following into consideration:

The Care Act 2014

The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012

The Equality Act 2010

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Mental Capacity Act 2005

Sexual Offences Act 2003

The Human Rights Act 1998

Serious incident reporting to the Charity Commission

The Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016

Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007

Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014, part 7 Safeguarding

Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership Policy 2015 (NI)

1.4 Policy purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Create a culture where families (adults and children) are valued and their right to safety and respect is upheld
- Protect adults at risk who come into contact with Home-Start in the course of its work by actively managing risk to minimise circumstances where adults at risk engaging with Home-Start may suffer harm
- Work collaboratively with other organisations to ensure that adults at risk are safeguarded and protected
- Inform partners, beneficiaries and the general public of the overarching principles in relation to safeguarding and protecting adults at risk
- Provide all staff, volunteers and trustees with the overarching principles and procedures that guide our approach to safeguarding and protecting adults at risk.

1.5 Definitions

An adult at risk is:

- Someone over the age of 18 who has a need for care and support
- Someone who is currently experiencing, or is at risk of, neglect or abuse
- Someone who is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect, or the risk of it.

This may include a person who:

- Is elderly or frail
- Has a mental illness, including dementia
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Has an addiction to drugs or alcohol, or whose use of drugs or alcohol is causing them harm
- Is homeless
- Is experiencing domestic abuse, which could include coercive control, or is deemed at risk of experiencing it in the near future.
- Is a victim of modern slavery
- Is being sexually exploited by gangs, or an individual. Or, is at risk of being exploited due to several known risk factors
- Is victim of forced marriage, or is liable to be forced into marriage against their will in the near future
- Is an asylum seeker.

Adult Abuse may involve all or any of the following

- Physical abuse

- Domestic violence or abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Female Genital mutilation
- Radicalisation
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Neglect or acts of omission
- Self-neglect.

1.4 Principles

This policy and following procedures are based on the following principles.

All adults at risk in Home-Start, irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to:

- Their money, goods and possessions treated with respect and to receive equal protection for themselves and their property.
- Guidance and help in seeking assistance as a consequence of abuse.
- Be supported in making their own decisions about how they wish to proceed in the event of abuse and to know their wishes will only be over-ridden if it is considered necessary for their own safety or the safety of others.
- Be supported in bringing a complaint under any existing complaint procedure.
- Be supported in reporting the circumstances of any abuse to independent bodies.
- Have alleged, suspected or confirmed cases of abuse that come to light through Home-Start support dealt with as a priority.

It is the responsibility of all within Home-Start to report any concerns about abuse. Each nation and locality will have its own system, resources and reporting procedures which Home-Starts must be familiar with. Alternatively, adult abuse can be reported directly to the police.

Home-Start will treat any breach of this policy very seriously. For those who work for us, failure to follow the principles and procedures of safeguarding and protection could lead to disciplinary action, which may ultimately result in dismissal. For those who work with us, we reserve the right to immediately terminate any contract and, for trustees and volunteers, to require them to immediately cease being a trustee or volunteer.

All concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously.

1.5 Procedural Principles

Home-Start will take all possible steps to ensure that adults with whom it works are kept safe through:

- Clear procedures for raising concerns about an adult at risk

- Clear procedures for recording concerns in the file of a supported family
- Safe recruitment processes for all trustees, staff and volunteers including the obtaining of criminal records checks as appropriate
- Procedures to structure the management of an allegation of abuse against trustees, staff or volunteers
- Effective induction, training and support for trustees, staff and volunteers to ensure they are aware of and understand the importance of implementing this policy and the related procedures
- The appointment, training and visibility of at least one member of staff who has responsibility for safeguarding and protection from harm
- Mandatory Confidentiality & Data Protection Policies

Disclosure of Information

Home-Start recognises the importance of sharing information to protect an adult at risk and normally any disclosure of confidential information to any other person may only be undertaken with the express permission of the person.

Where it is considered necessary for the welfare and protection of an adult at risk, the person will be kept informed unless to do so would put their welfare and safety at risk of harm.

In recognition of its commitment to pass on concerns, Home-Start will maintain effective working partnerships with organisations working with adults at risk within the community and will maintain current information on and work within the requirements of the local procedures followed by statutory and voluntary agencies.

Procedure when there are concerns

- If anyone associated with Home-Start has concerns about the welfare of an adult at risk, they must raise those concerns and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Officer without delay
- If an adult discloses that they are being, or have been, abused this information must be taken seriously and the information must be passed to the designated person for dealing with their concerns without delay
- The first priority should always be to protect the safety of all adults and children at risk and it is the responsibility of all within Home-Start to act on any suspicion or evidence of abuse or neglect. Follow the Mandatory Safeguarding & Protecting Children policy if there are concerns about a child's welfare.

Escalation procedure

Occasionally situations arise when workers within one agency feel that the actions, inaction, or decisions of another agency do not adequately safeguard an adult at risk.

To safeguard and protect adults at risk, all practitioners have a duty to act assertively and proactively to ensure that an adult's welfare is the focus of safeguarding activity.

If a practitioner disagrees with a decision or response from any agency or service regarding a safeguarding or welfare concern, they must firstly consult with their line manager. If the practitioners are unable to resolve differences through discussion and/or meeting within a time scale which is acceptable to both of them, their disagreement should be considered under the Escalation or Professional disagreement procedures published in their local multi agency agreements.

Allegations against staff and volunteers

It is important that any concerns for the welfare of an adult at risk arising from abuse or harassment by a member of staff or volunteer should be reported immediately to the Designated Lead/Officer or, if they are implicated in the concerns, to the trustee responsible for safeguarding.

It may be that the employee will be suspended with pay during an investigation or a volunteer asked to cease volunteering pending the outcome of the investigation.

Below is a list of policies and documents that are also relevant to safeguarding and protection. You may find it helpful to refer to any of these additional documents when reading and using this policy.

- Safer recruitment and selection of staff policy
- Safeguarding Checklist
- Confidentiality
- Data Protection
- Staff supervision & appraisal
- Recruitment, Supervision and Management of Volunteers
- Safeguarding & protecting children Code of Conduct
- Record of Concern and Action (ROCA) - form
- Reporting Serious Incidents and reputational threats to HSUK
- Health & Safety
- Online Safety guidance
- Whistleblowing
- Recruitment of ex-offenders - model policy