



## Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

### Introduction

Off The Fence recognises that many of the clients who use our services are vulnerable and in great need. In order to provide a professional service we adhere to the guidelines set out in the Sussex Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures (Edition 4. May 2019). Under review 2023.

<https://sussexsafeguardingadults.procedures.org.uk/>

### Who is a vulnerable adult?

'Vulnerable adult' means any person aged 18 years or over who may need extra support with every day living tasks, and may be unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation.

People who are receiving or may need services provided through Antifreeze and Gateway because of physical disability, learning disability or mental health condition, people who are homeless, victims of domestic violence, or addicted to drugs or other substances may also be vulnerable.

### What do we mean by abuse?

Abuse is where a person who is unable to protect themselves is ill treated or neglected. This may be an isolated incident or happen repeatedly over time. Abuse may be deliberate but can also be a result of poor care or ignorance. A person may be neglected, persuaded to agree to something against their will or taken advantage of because they do not fully understand the consequences of their choices or actions. Abuse of a vulnerable person can take many forms. It may be physical, mental, emotional, sexual or financial.

Examples of abuse are:

- Hitting, slapping, pushing or handling someone roughly
- Giving medication incorrectly
- Depriving someone of food, clothing or warmth
- Preventing someone from getting appropriate care
- Any kind of sexual activity where the person has not given consent, or is unable to give consent
- Misuse or theft of money, possessions or property
- Pressurising someone in connection with wills or property, or controlling access to the person's own money or benefits
- Shouting, threatening to punish, swearing or using degrading language
- Neglecting someone's medical or physical needs, either deliberately, or by failing to understand what the person's needs are
- Discrimination or harassment for any reason

An abuser could be anyone. They could be someone the vulnerable person knows, such as a partner or other relative, a friend or neighbour, paid staff, carers or volunteers, or another vulnerable adult.

Abuse can take place anywhere – in the person's own home, in a residential or nursing home, a hospital, day centre or in a public place.

### When raising a safeguarding concern

If something happens to someone you know, or are working with, or you see or hear about something which could be adult abuse, do the following:



- If there is immediate danger, or someone needs urgent medical attention, call the police or an ambulance, or if you think an offence has been committed.
  - Talk to the adult as soon as possible unless this would put them, others or you at risk, about what they want to happen, what action they do or do not want taken, or want to take themselves. Do not use leading questions, instead ask open questions eg. can you tell me/explain/describe what happened/when did it happen/where did it happen etc.
  - Explain your responsibility to share information, or to raise a safeguarding concern in line with this policy.
  - Contact your manager regarding your concern (unless your manager is implicated, then contact one of the Designated Named Persons) and also either adult social care direct or your own contact e.g. mental health team, or the homeless department at Sussex Police.
  - Contact Children's Services if you know, or suspect a child may also be affected or is at risk:
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (01273) 290400**  
[mash@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:mash@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk)
- Fill out an **Incident Alert Form\***, with the information you have.
  - If there is a possibility that an offence has been committed, do not tamper with or move any potential evidence. Do not clean up.
  - Be mindful that information relating to safeguarding adults issues can be particularly sensitive.
- Do not:
- Attempt to look into the matter yourself.
  - Be judgemental.
  - Promise the adult you can keep this secret.
  - Destroy any evidence.
  - Confront anyone who is thought to be responsible for what has happened, and do not tell them that concerns have been raised about them.

**Contact adult social care:-**

**Access Point Team 01273 295555      Sussex Police 01273 475432**  
[accesspoint@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:accesspoint@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

**What will be required of you?**

When a concern is reported to adult social care, the following information will be needed, where it is available:

- If you think there is any immediate or future risk.
- What the adult's views of the incident are, what they want to happen, and if they have given their consent for you to contact adult social care. If you do not know the adult's views, then give the reason you were not able to talk to them (this should usually only be if there was a concern that this might put them, others or you at risk).
- When the incident happened.
- Where the incident happened.
- Who was involved (names and relationships).

**What will happen if you report your concerns to Adult Social Care?**

Every reported concern about abuse or suspected abuse will be looked at as a matter of



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urgency to determine what should happen next. The agencies involved (often the police and health professionals and voluntary organisations together with social services) will consider what actions may be required. This will include an assessment of the situation, and can lead to a subsequent investigation. The vulnerable adult's welfare will always be the focus of the work and their views and wishes will influence any actions taken.

Off the Fence will act within its confidentiality policy and will usually gain permission from service users before sharing information about them with another agency. However, OTF will inform service users that where a person is in danger, or is perceived to be in danger, a child is at risk or a crime has been committed, or is perceived to be a concern, then a decision may be taken to pass information to another agency without the service user's consent.

The Designated Named Persons for Safeguarding Adults in OTF will be informed whenever an incident is reported.

Off the Fence has appointed individuals who are responsible for dealing with any Safeguarding Adults concerns. The Designated Named Persons for Safeguarding Adults within Off the Fence are:

<b>Aitch Grahame</b>	Work Telephone number 01273 933885
<b>Monica Harding</b>	Work Telephone number 01273 933885
<b>Paul Young</b>	Work telephone number 01273 933885 Mobile number 07843 356016 Emergency contact number 01273 416094
<b>Reb du Preez (Trustee)</b>	SGtrustee@offthefence.org.uk

### **Recording and managing confidential information**

Off the Fence is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information around Safeguarding Adults issues should be shared only with those who need to know.

All allegations/concerns should be recorded on an Incident Alert Form. The information should be factual and not based on opinions, record what the person tells you, what you have seen and witnessed if appropriate. The information that is recorded will be kept secure and will comply with data protection. Any completed Incident Alert Forms will be secured in a locked cabinet at Head Office. Access to this information will be restricted to the Designated Named Persons and the CEO.

**\*Incident Alert forms can be found on the server under Master Documents>Safeguarding\***

### **Disseminating/Reviewing policy and procedures**

This Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure will be clearly communicated to staff, trustees, volunteers. The Designated Named Persons will be responsible for ensuring that this is done. The Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures will be reviewed regularly by the Designated Named Persons in conjunction with the CEO. The Designated Named Persons will also ensure that any changes are clearly communicated to staff, trustees and volunteers.

Signed by Chair of Trustees:

Date: August 2023