

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults



This is an introductory guide for voluntary and community groups about how to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

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Introduction

This guide will be in two parts: Part 1 will cover safeguarding children and young people and Part 2 will cover safeguarding vulnerable adults.

Part 1 - Safeguarding Children and Young People

Children and young people are vulnerable. They rely on their families for nourishment, comfort, safety, love and affection. All staff and volunteers that work with children and young people also have an essential role to play in the positive development of their lives.

Staff and volunteers who come into regular contact with children and young people need information and practical guidance to ensure that they are able to:

- recognise possible signs of abuse
- handle concerns appropriately
- follow organisational policies and procedures
- access additional support and guidance

Child abuse is an emotive subject for those who care for the wellbeing of children. Taking the right action can be instrumental in transforming a potentially damaging situation into a more secure and positive future for the child or young person.

Safeguarding Children

what does it mean?

Safeguarding is a relatively new term which is broader than 'child protection' as it also includes prevention.

Safeguarding has been defined as:

"All agencies working with children, young people and their families taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised."

and

"Where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare all agencies taking appropriate actions to address those concerns by working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies."

Safeguarding Children, 2005 - The 2nd Joint Chief Inspectors' Report on Arrangements to Safeguard Children

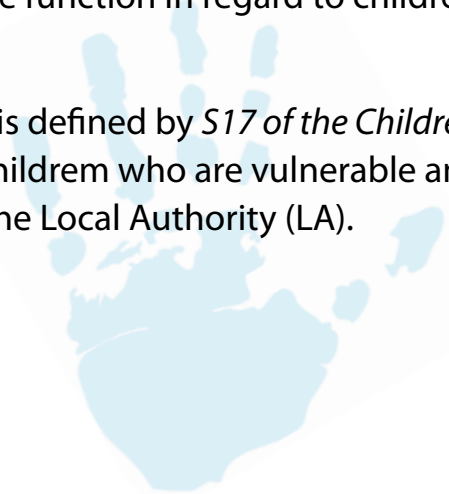
Safeguarding children is vital for voluntary and community sector organisations as they have a duty of care towards the children and young people they come in contact with.

Having safeguards in place within an organisation not only protects and promotes the welfare of children but also enhances the confidence of trustees, staff, volunteers, parents, carers and the general public.

These safeguards should include a child protection policy and procedures for dealing with issues of concern or abuse.

Language commonly used in Safeguarding:

- **Abuse and Neglect** - Forms of maltreatment of a child.
- **Child Protection** - Process of protecting individual children.
- **Children's Social Care** - The work of the Local Authority exercising their Social Care function in regard to children and young people.
- **Children 'in need'** - This is defined by *S17 of the Children Act 1989* as being those children who are vulnerable and in need of services from the Local Authority (LA).



Child Protection

what does it mean?

Child protection means 'the process of protecting children from abuse and neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully'.

- We all have a duty to **PROTECT** children and young people from suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm as a result of abuse and neglect.
- We all have a duty to **ENSURE** that children and young people can develop, be healthy and thrive in the best way possible.

For the purpose of child protection legislation the term 'child' refers to anyone up to the age of 18.



How Does Safeguarding and Child Protection Apply to my Organisation?

All organisations that work with children and young people need to be aware of how the issues of safeguarding apply to the organisation, staff, volunteers and trustees. There are some issues that your organisation should consider and prepare for.

Your organisation needs to make appropriate plans in case:

- A member of your staff team has concerns about the safety of a child they are working with
- A member of your staff team has to make a referral to Children's Social Care or the police
- Your organisation is asked by Children's Social Care to provide information about a child or a family

- Your organisation or a staff member is asked to be involved in an assessment
- To help your organisation deal with these issues you should have a Child Protection Policy and a set of procedures that all staff, volunteers and trustees must follow
- Safeguarding policies and procedures should be part of a collection of organisational policies and procedures that include Health and Safety, Code of Conduct, Safe Recruitment, Managing Staff and Volunteers, Review and Appraisal, Data Protection and Complaints.



Child Protection Policy

what to include

A Child Protection Policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children from harm.

The essential elements of a Child Protection Policy are:

- A recognition that the welfare of the child is paramount
- Acknowledgement that prevention is a key element of safeguarding
- Commitment that all children (without exception) have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs
- A named person (and deputy) who is responsible for dealing with Child Protection issues and a commitment that the named person (and deputy) will be trained in Child Protection appropriate to the level in which they operate

- A commitment that all concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by trustees, staff and volunteers and responded to accordingly (this could include referral to Children's Services and/or the police)
- Reference to principles, legislation and guidance that underpin the policy
- A statement to show who the policy applies to (i.e. all trustees, staff and volunteers)
- Reference to all associated policies and procedures which promote children's safety and welfare e.g. health and safety and photography
- A commitment to safe recruitment, selection and vetting
- A statement to show that children and their parents are informed of the policy and procedures as appropriate
- Arrangements for policies and procedures to be reviewed annually
- Approval and endorsement of the policy by the Board of Trustees or Management Committee.



Child Protection Procedures

a useful checklist

It is important to recognise that it is not enough just to have a policy in place. To help your organisation put the policy into practice you will need to establish a set of procedures and systems to ensure your policy is implemented.

Procedures should provide clear, step-by-step guidance on what to do in different circumstances. A clear set of procedures should clarify the roles and responsibilities of staff, volunteers and trustees.



The procedures should include:

- ✓ Reference to the Child Protection Policy – where it is kept and how it can be accessed
- ✓ A named person (and deputy) who is responsible for dealing with Child Protection issues
- ✓ A code of behaviour for trustees, staff and volunteers. Consequences of breaching this code should be linked to disciplinary and grievance procedures
- ✓ Information about child protection training (which staff and volunteers will be trained and how often)
- ✓ Information about systems for supervision and support
- ✓ Clear instructions about what to do and who to speak to if there are concerns about a child's safety/welfare
- ✓ Guidance on how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse
- ✓ Clear instructions about how to act on a disclosure of abuse
- ✓ A process for managing allegations made against staff or volunteers
- ✓ Guidance on confidentiality and information sharing
- ✓ Information about safe recruitment, selection and vetting procedures that include checks into the eligibility and the suitability of all trustees, staff and volunteers who have direct and indirect contact with children and young people

- ✓ Information about the system for recording information and dealing with complaints
- ✓ Reference to the organisation's Complaints Procedure. (This should include an element around Safeguarding which enables adults and children to voice concerns about abusive or unacceptable behaviour towards children)
- ✓ Relevant contact details for children's services, police, health and NSPCC help lines
- ✓ Informing staff, volunteers and trustees of the organisation's policies and procedures should be part of the induction programme. Everyone should sign to say they understand the responsibilities within the policies and procedures.



Further Advice and Support

Wakefield District Safeguarding Children Board

This organisation offers a comprehensive Multi Agency Training Programme, including Assessing Risk, the Child Wellbeing Model and Court Skills.

For booking enquiries call Jenny Ward on 01924 302626 or telephone 01924 302625 for general information.

Young Lives Consortium

This organisation offers Basic Child Protection Training. Contact the Pre-School Learning Alliance on 01924 781083 for booking enquiries.

Childline - Tel: 0800 1111 (*free confidential 24hr helpline*)

NSPCC 24 hour Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000
Text Phone: 0800 056 0566 (*both numbers free from a land line*)
Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

NCPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit - Tel: 0116 234 7278

Web: www.thecpsu.org.uk

Save the Children - Tel: 0800 814 8148 (*free from a land line*)

Tel: 020 7012 6400 Web: www.savethechildren.org.uk

Safeguarding Children Partnership

This organisation is a registered charity working with the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) to attain SAFE (Safer Activities for Everyone) standards.

Tel: 01379 678961 Web: www.oursafesite.com

Keeping Children Safe: Standards for Child Protection

Web: www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk

Working Together to Safeguard Children

Web: www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

Finding New Trustees (Info Sheet CC30)

This is a Charity Commission document describing checks and safeguarding for trustees of organisations working with children or other vulnerable groups.

It can be found online at: [www.charity-commission.gov.uk/
supportingcharities/protection.asp](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/supportingcharities/protection.asp)



Part 2 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

what does it mean?

The Safeguarding Adults National Framework of Standards of Good Practice and Outcomes states that:

“All persons have the right to live their lives free from violence and abuse. This right is underpinned by the duty on public agencies under the Human Rights Act (1998) to intervene proportionately to protect the right citizens. These rights include ‘Right to life’, ‘Freedom from torture’ and ‘Right to family life’. Any adult at risk of abuse or neglect should be able to access public organisations for appropriate interventions which enable them to live a life free from violence and abuse.”

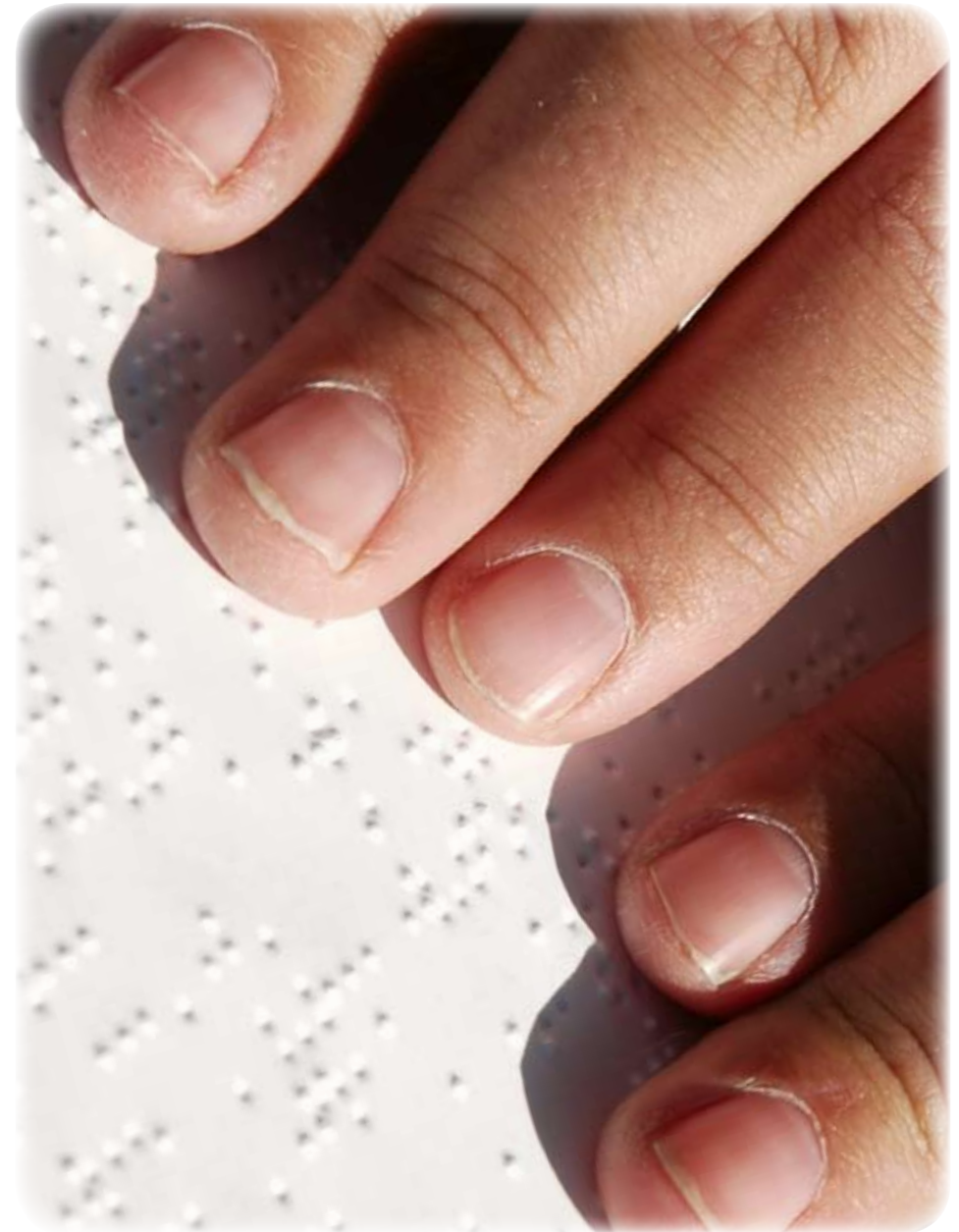
This should be considered alongside the 2000 ‘No Secrets’ publication by the Department of Health which defines a ‘vulnerable adult’ as someone who “is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other physical disability, age or illness and is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation”.



All Vulnerable Adults Have a Right to:

- The protection of the law
- Live free from violence and abuse
- Privacy
- Be treated with dignity
- Lead an independent life and be enabled to do so
- Independent support and representation
- Have their rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, disability, age, religious or cultural background, beliefs
- Not be treated as unable to make a decision unless all practicable steps to help them to do so have been taken without success
- Have decisions made for or on behalf of them (if they lack capacity), that are in their best interests
- Assessments of themselves and their families which are consistent with current best practice
- Know that all staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report all concerns regarding abuse or suspected abuse. Also, all staff and volunteers have the right to expect that their concerns are acted upon and treated seriously without fear of reprisal

- A co-ordinated approach to meeting their needs (if a number of professionals are involved in supporting a vulnerable adult and their family).



Safeguarding Boards

Although the responsibility for co-ordination of safeguarding adult arrangements rests with 'Councils with Social Services Responsibilities', the operation of safeguarding procedures is a joint responsibility.

In the Wakefield district all policies and procedures have been agreed and endorsed by the directors of all partner agencies to the Safeguarding Board.

The partners agree to:

- Do everything within their power to ensure the safeguarding of adults within the context of 'No Secret' (DH 2000) and the standards contained within 'Safeguarding Adults' (ADSS2005) are met
- Support staff and volunteers when concerns are raised
- Commit to providing training and development opportunities for all staff to support them in their safeguarding responsibilities

The Wakefield and District Safeguarding Adult Board co-ordinates and ensures the effectiveness of each agency in its safeguarding function.

The main aim of the Safeguarding Board is to ensure the multi-disciplinary co-ordination of referral, investigation, assessment, planning, and case review services to vulnerable adults, who have been or are at risk of being abused.

It is the duty of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Adults Board to safeguard vulnerable adults and also encompass the wider preventative needs of all adults.



The Nature of Adult Abuse

Forms of abuse include physical, sexual, psychological, financial or material, neglect and acts of omission, discriminatory abuse, self neglect and institutional abuse.

Abuse can be a single event or repeated events or as in the cases of neglect, it may be a process going on over time. Abuse may occur as a result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance or as a result of poor practice.

Vulnerable adults can be abused by anyone, including carers, relatives, professional staff, volunteers, neighbours, friends or organisations. More than one person may abuse a vulnerable adult and some perpetrators will abuse more than one victim.

Institutions and services can be guilty of abuse if they persistently fail to care for the needs of people using their services.

Patterns of Abuse

- **Serial abuse** is when the perpetrator seeks out and 'grooms' vulnerable adults. Sexual abuse or financial abuse may fall into this category
- **Long term abuse** is usually associated with family relationships e.g. domestic abuse or can be neglect of care due to other issues such as mental health issues
- **Opportunist abuse** is usually theft e.g. due to money being left around
- **Bullying** can include physical, financial, discriminatory or psychological abuse.



Good Practice, Principles, Policy and Procedure

All voluntary and community organisations working with vulnerable people should:

- ✓ Promote the general welfare, health and development of vulnerable people and protect them from harm
- ✓ Recognise that vulnerable people have rights and treat them with respect
- ✓ Be sensitive to every person's identity including culture, beliefs, ethnic background, gender, disability, age and sexuality
- ✓ Plan the work of your organisation to minimise opportunities for vulnerable people to suffer harm whilst using your organisation's services

- ✓ Develop effective policies and procedures for responding to incidents and alleged incidents of abuse
- ✓ Develop effective policies and procedures to handle complaints
- ✓ Ensure their policies and procedures include mechanisms for reporting and recording
- ✓ Apply their service principles and practice procedures around safeguarding in a consistent way
- ✓ Ensure that an appropriate system for referral to and co-operation with the Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Committees is in place
- ✓ Take incidents of potential abuse seriously, discuss these with managers and ensure they are recorded
- ✓ Adopt and consistently apply a safe method of recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers
- ✓ Train volunteers and appropriate staff members to be aware of risks to, and the needs of, vulnerable people
- ✓ Establish links with other relevant agencies, services, carers and families.



Safeguarding Checks and Legal Requirements

Organisations that fall under the Care Standards Act must screen their staff and volunteers.

Other organisations have a 'duty of care' towards the people they work with, i.e. to do everything reasonable to protect others from harm, which may include checking if someone has a criminal record.

Wherever possible, your organisation is advised to get a Criminal Records Bureau Check (CRB) for new members of staff or volunteers before they start work. If this is not possible, you are advised to take on staff or volunteers only if you are satisfied on the basis of other checks you make (such as references), that it is safe to do so.

Your organisation should also ensure that the new member of your team is always supervised when in contact with vulnerable adults until the CRB check is complete.

Clear recruitment and supervision procedures reduce the potential risk.

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)

These new arrangements for checking employees have been phased in since autumn 2008. All individuals barred by the Independent Safeguarding Authority must not engage in regulated activity with vulnerable adults (or children) whether paid or unpaid.

It will also become a criminal offence for employers to employ someone if they are not registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority. Employers should not permit a barred individual to work or volunteer for any length of time in a regulated activity.



How To Report an Incident

It is important that all staff, volunteers and trustees of your organisation know how to report concerns or an incident.

Social Care Direct

This should be your first point of contact for any social care enquiries.

Tel: 0845 8 503 503 (*line open 24 hours a day*)

Fax: 01924 303450 Mini Com: 01924 303450

Contacting the Police in an Emergency

Always dial 999 in an emergency when there is a danger to life, or a crime is in progress. For non-emergencies you should telephone 0845 6060606.



Further Advice and Support

Safeguarding adults is an important issue for voluntary and community organisations. This guide is a starting point to help you understand and be aware of the issues. It is important that your organisation seeks out further guidance from specialist organisations. Below is a list of agencies that can provide you with further advice and support.

Adult Protection Manager

Wakefield District Family Services lead officer

Tel: 01924 302149

Counsel and Care for the Elderly

The advice service operates from 10am to 1pm Monday to Friday

Tel: 020 7485 1566 and 0845 300 7585

Web: www.counselandcare.org.uk

Family Services complaints (Wakefield District)

Tel: 01924 306802

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)

Tel: 01325 391 328

Mencap

A charity working with people with a learning disability and their families and carers.

Tel: 020 7454 0454

Web: www.mencap.org.uk

Powerhouse

A charity that challenges discrimination against and the abuse of women with learning difficulties. They provide awareness raising services, advice and support.

Tel: 020 7366 6366

Web: www.thepowerhouse.org.uk

Practitioner Alliance Against Abuse of Vulnerable Adults (PAVA)

This organisation strives to develop practice-based interventions and to generate positive outcomes in working with the abuse of vulnerable adults. PAVA work in collaboration with practitioners in the statutory, voluntary and private sectors.

Write to them at: PO BOX 127, Ryde, PO33 9AE

Public Concern at Work

An independent authority on public interest whistle blowing.

Tel: 020 7404 6609

Web: www.pcaw.co.uk

Respond

A service for people with learning disabilities who have been sexually abused.

Helpline: 0808 808 0700

Web: www.respond.org.uk

Safe @ Home

Promoting zero tolerance to domestic abuse.

Tel: 0800 915 1561 (*free from a landline*)

Email: safeathome@wakefield.gov.uk

The General Social Care Council

This is the workforce regulator and guardian of standards for the social care workforce in England. All concerns will be looked at to see if they relate to a registered social care worker and are about the conduct or behaviour of the worker.

Tel: 020 7397 5120

The Healthcare Commission

This is the independent inspection body for both the NHS and independent healthcare. The Healthcare Commission is responsible for reviewing complaints about the NHS or independent healthcare services in England that have not been resolved locally.

Tel: 0207 448 8179

The West Yorkshire Police vulnerable victims' team

Consists of specialist police officers who have expertise in supporting vulnerable adults.

Tel: 01977 601073

Victim Support

A national charity which helps people affected by crime. They provide free and confidential support.

Tel: 0845 3030 900

Web: www.victimsupport.org.uk

Victim Support Leeds and Wakefield

Tel: 01924 369107



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