

## Adult Safeguarding Policy

PSC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, engaged in the breadth of its activities.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of PSC in relation to the protection of adults from abuse. PSC has a separate policy in respect of the protection of children and young people.

All people have the right to be safe from harm and should be able to live free from fear of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The key objectives of this policy are:

- To protect the adults whose families use PSC services.
- To explain the responsibilities the staff, volunteers and trustees of PSC have in respect of the protection of vulnerable adults.
- To provide staff, volunteers and trustees with an overview of vulnerable adult protection.
- To provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where protection issues arise.

### Vulnerable adults

For the purpose of this document 'adult' means a person aged 18 years or over. This includes vulnerable adults who access PSC services as well as vulnerable young people above the age of 18 in the care of adults who are accessing support from PSC.

Some adults are less able to protect themselves than others, and some have difficulty making their wishes and feelings known. This may make them vulnerable to abuse. The Care Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities to act when they have 'reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in its area (whether or not ordinarily resident there):

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs),
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.' (Care Act 2014, section 42)

So safeguarding is for people who, because of issues such as dementia, learning disability, mental ill-health or substance abuse, have care and support needs that may make them more vulnerable to abuse or neglect.

PSC also recognizes that caring for children with additional needs brings both rewards and challenges. For some adults, the pressures of caring can be overwhelming and can give rise to emotional and mental health difficulties. PSC recognizes that these difficulties fall within the scope of its commitment to adult safeguarding.

## **The role of staff, volunteers and trustees**

All staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of PSC have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of vulnerable adults.

Staff, volunteers and trustees may receive disclosures of abuse and observe vulnerable adults who are at risk. This policy will enable staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific protection issues.

## **Adult Safeguarding Lead**

This is the person in the organization responsible for leading on adult safeguarding. At PSC this role is fulfilled by the CEO of PSC.

The Adult Safeguarding Lead, also known as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will:

- be responsible to make decisions about notifying adult social services if required and consider alternative actions, where necessary
- ensure that the safeguarding adults policies and procedures are in place and up to date.
- ensure a safe environment is promoted for staff and volunteers and adults accessing the service
- ensure they are up to date with their safeguarding adults training.

## **What is Adult Safeguarding?**

Statutory Guidance from the Department of Health states that:

*'Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.'*

Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Department of Health, updated February 2017

All adults should be able to live free from fear and harm. But some may find it hard to get the help and support they need to stop abuse.

An adult may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to many reasons, including their mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss or physical or learning disabilities.

This could be an adult who is usually able to protect themselves from harm but maybe unable to do so because of an accident, disability, frailty, addiction or illness.

## Key principles of adult safeguarding

PSC adheres to following the six key principles that underpin safeguarding work and which are embedded in The Care Act 2014. These are:

### 1. Empowerment

People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent

### 2. Prevention

It is better to take action before harm occurs.

### 3. Proportionality

The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

### 4. Protection

Support and representation for those in greatest need.

### 5. Partnership

Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

### 6. Accountability

Accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice.

## Person-centred approach

The Care Act 2014 and Guidance state that safeguarding:

- is person led
- engages the person from the start, throughout and at the end to address their needs
- is outcome focused
- is based upon a community approach from all partners and providers.

## Types of abuse

The Care Act Guidance identifies ten types of abuse. These are:

- **Physical abuse**, including: assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint and inappropriate physical sanctions
- **Domestic violence or abuse**, including: psychological abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, emotional abuse and so-called 'honour' based violence

- **Sexual abuse**, including: rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, sexual assault, sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting
- **Psychological or emotional abuse**, including: threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation, unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks
- **Financial or material abuse**, including: theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- **Modern slavery**, including: human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.
- **Discriminatory abuse**, including: harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity age, disability, sexual orientation or religion
- **Organisational or institutional abuse**, including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home.
- **Neglect or acts of omission**, including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services and the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating
- **Self-neglect** - this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

## How to spot abuse

Signs of abuse include:

- The person may tell you.
- The person may say something that worries you.
- Somebody else may say something that gives cause for concern, for example: a colleague, a family member, a friend, or another person accessing PSC services
- You may see something – an incident or an injury or other sign.
- You might see and/or hear something happen:
  - someone being bullied or intimidated
  - someone being made to feel frightened or unhappy
  - someone in a situation of unnecessary risk

There may be physical signs of abuse, such as:

- cuts
- bruises
- burns
- grip or slap marks
- black eyes
- unusual pattern or location of injury
- cigarette marks
- torn, stained or blood stained clothes

There may be other signs such as:

- inappropriate, dirty or soiled clothes
- no food or drink available for the person
- bills not being paid or services, e.g. telephone cut off
- shortage of money

The person might say things or behave in a way that causes you concern:

- The person may seem unhappy or distressed
- The person may appear frightened, anxious or agitated without an obvious cause, or in relation to certain people
- Sleeping problems
- Constant visits to the toilet without a medical reason
- Other unexplained changes in how the person behaves

You may not know. It is enough that you are worried.

## **Who do I go to if I am concerned?**

The Designated Lead for Safeguarding (DSL) at PSC is the CEO, to whom all concerns should be raised (at any time).

*Mrs Ruth Pearse, 0118 986 532 (PSC office) or 07876 275731*

In her absence, matters will be dealt with by the Director of Family Services, Mrs Zobia Kalim

*Mrs Zobia Kalim, 07557 102623*

## **What should I do if I am concerned?**

Staff and volunteers at PSC who have any adult safeguarding concerns should:

### **1. Respond**

Take emergency action if someone is at immediate risk of harm/in need of urgent medical attention. Dial 999 for emergency services

Get brief details about what has happened and what the adult would like done about it, but do not probe or conduct a mini-investigation

Seek consent from the adult to take action and to report the concern. Consider whether the adult may lack capacity to make decisions about their own and other people's safety and wellbeing. If you decide to act against their wishes or without their consent, you must record your decision and the reasons for this.

## **2. Report**

Report the concerns to the DSL.

## **3. Record**

- Keep a factual record of the incident and actions taken.
- As far as possible, records should be written contemporaneously, and must be dated and signed.
- Records about safeguarding concerns are confidential and should only be shared on a need to know basis.

## **4. Refer**

In making a decision whether to refer or not, the DSL should take into account:

- the adult's wishes and preferred outcome
- whether the adult has mental capacity to make an informed decision about their own and others' safety
- the safety or wellbeing of children or other adults with care and support needs
- whether there is a person in a position of trust involved
- whether a crime has been committed.

This should inform the decision whether to notify the concern to the following people:

- the police if a crime has been committed and/or
- the relevant Local Authority care team for possible safeguarding enquiry
- relevant regulatory bodies such as Care Quality Commission, Ofsted, Charities commission
- service commissioning teams
- family/relatives as appropriate (seek advice from adult social services)

The DSL lead should keep a record of the analysis of the information gathered and the reasons for referring the concern or reasons for not referring.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and may affect one person or more. Staff and volunteers should look beyond single incidents to identify patterns of harm. Accurate recording of information will also assist in recognising any patterns.

Staff and volunteers should ensure that the adult with care and support needs is involved at all stages of their safeguarding enquiry ensuring a person-centred approach is adopted. The only exception is if sharing the information would potentially put the adult at risk of further or increased risk of harm

## Referral contact details

Reading Borough Council:	0118 937 3747 safeguarding.adults@reading.gov.uk
Wokingham Borough Council	0118 974 6371 AdultSafeguardingHub@wokingham.gov.uk
West Berkshire Council	01635 519056 safeguardingadults@westberks.gov.uk
Slough Borough Council	01753 475111 safeguarding.adults@slough.gov.uk.
Bracknell Forest	01344 352000 Front.desk@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	01628 683744 during office working hours 01344 786543 outside office working hours

**Source:** <https://www.berkshiresafeguardingadults.co.uk/>

PSC understands that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and any staff member, volunteer or trustee reporting a concern. should proactively seek feedback to ensure that action has been taken. The DSL should respond promptly to such request.

## Multi-agency approach

PSC is commissioned by Local Authorities to deliver projects on their behalf. PSC will comply with the Berkshire multi-agency adult safeguarding policy and procedures which are built on strong multi-agency partnerships working together, with adults to prevent abuse and neglect where possible, and provide a consistent approach when responding to safeguarding concerns. This entails joint accountability for the management of risk, timely information sharing, cooperation and a collegiate approach that respects boundaries and confidentiality within legal frameworks.

See: <https://www.berkshiresafeguardingadults.co.uk/>

## Recruitment

PSC recognises that robust recruitment, selection, induction and supervision processes help engage candidates who are well suited to the organisation and who are able to uphold the values of the organization and follow its guidelines in ensuring a robust safeguarding approach.

PSC operates procedures that take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of both children and adults. This includes arrangements for appropriate checks on new staff, volunteers and trustees. PSC undertakes to ensure that at least one member on any recruitment panel has undertaken Safer Recruitment training.

New employees, volunteer peer supporters and trustees will be required to provide two references and undertake face-to-face interviews prior to any offer of employment or confirmation of the role of trustee or peer supporter.

PSC will request enhanced DBS checks on all new members of staff, trustees and volunteers and this check must be completed to the satisfaction of the CEO before the member of staff, trustees or volunteer undertakes any activity that brings them into direct contact with service users, including telephone contact.

Records of these checks are maintained in a secure database by PSC administrative staff.

Staff, volunteers and trustees are encouraged to subscribe to the DBS update service. See <https://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service>

Where this is not the case, renewal of DBS checks will be undertaken every 3 years.

## **Training**

PSC is committed to ensuring that its staff, volunteers and trustees have an appropriate level of training to enable them to understand and fulfil their responsibilities towards safeguarding adults.

PSC is committed to ensuring that all staff, trustees and volunteers undertake training to gain a basic awareness of signs and symptoms of abuse. PSC will ensure that the Adult Safeguarding Lead and other members of staff, trustees and volunteers have access to training around safeguarding adults.

Safeguarding training forms part of the induction process for new employees. As a fundamental part of this, all new employees, as well as staff and trustees, should familiarise themselves with the content of this policy.

## **Whistleblowing**

If a member of staff or a volunteer has any concerns about the actions and attitude of the Safeguarding Lead, they should report the matter to the Chair of Trustees of PSC. If all internal routes are exhausted, seek advice from the Berkshire Safeguarding Adults hub or the local care team. [www.berkshiresafeguardingadults.co.uk](http://www.berkshiresafeguardingadults.co.uk)



## **Associated PSC documents and policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following other PSC policies:

- PSC Safeguarding Policy
- PSC Confidentiality Policy
- PSC Whistleblowing Policy
- PSC Recruitment and Selection Policy

## **Legislation underpinning this policy**

The Care Act 2014: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

Statutory Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

## **Resources used to draw up this policy**

This policy has been developed from the PSC safeguarding policy and has used for some parts as a reference the Autism Berkshire adult safeguarding policy.

This policy was also drawn up with reference to:

- The Care Act 2014 and guidance
- The Social Care Institute for Excellence

## **Review of this policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the PSC board of trustees.  
Adopted October 2022