

Safeguarding Policy

October 2025

Safeguarding Officer: Laura Farrant

Introduction

As part of its activities the Band seeks to serve the needs of children and adults at risk, promoting holistic development.

In doing so the Band takes seriously the welfare of all children and adults at risk who are involved in its activities.

The Band aims to ensure that they are welcomed into a safe, caring environment with a happy and friendly atmosphere.

The Band recognises that it is the responsibility of each one of its Members, Agents and Representatives to prevent the abuse of children and adults at risk, and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

The Band recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and regularly review procedures, which are designed to prevent and to be alert to such abuse.

The Band is committed to supporting, resourcing, and training those who work with children and adults at risk and to providing appropriate supervision.

The Band will ensure that DBS checks are carried out against the Safeguarding Officer and at least one other Member at least annually (and where necessary the Band will pay for the provision of such checks).

Definitions and interpretation

In interpreting this policy, the definitions found in the Constitution of the Band should be applied.

Child: anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, even if they are living independently, are a member of the armed forces or is in hospital (as defined by the Children Act 1989)

Adult at Risk: any person aged 18 years or over who:

- has needs for care and support;
- 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 abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Abuse: abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Physical – e.g. pushing, slapping, rough-handling, hitting, over-medicating, restraint, poisoning, burning/scalding, drowning and suffocating;
- Sexual – e.g. rape, sexual assault, sexual act to which someone has not consented or was pressured into consenting to, inappropriate touching and non-contact activities (such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities);
- Emotional – e.g. accusations, possessiveness, controlling behaviour, rejection, gaslighting;
- Psychological – e.g. shouting, continual criticism, undermining confidence, humiliation, threats, social deprivation, coercion, and any other actions causing someone to feel frightened or in danger;
- Exploitation – e.g. unfairly manipulating someone for profit or personal gain;
- Financial or material – e.g. theft, fraud and coercion in relation to financial affairs (including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions);

- Neglect and acts of omission – e.g. ignoring/excluding, not offering appropriate medical or physical care, withholding of medication, treatment, nutrition or heating and failure to protect someone from physical or emotional harm or danger;
- Discrimination – e.g. discrimination on grounds of age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, or religion as set out in the Equality Act 2010;
- Organisational – e.g. where the culture in an organisation or specific setting undermines individual choice and self-determination;
- Self-neglect – e.g. lack of self-care, squalor and hoarding;
- Domestic abuse – e.g. physical or sexual violence or threats and controlling behaviour;
- Modern slavery – e.g. forced labour and domestic servitude;

Safeguarding children:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

(as defined in the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance)

Safeguarding Children

Policy

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 (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 Members 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.

Awareness:

All Members, Agents and Representatives will be made aware of this policy as part of their welcome process and there will be regular reminders at least as the policy is reviewed.

Where necessary, relevant Members will be encouraged to attend appropriate training courses.

Reviewing the Policy and Procedure:

This policy and procedure will be reviewed every two years or sooner if legislation or best practice indicates this is necessary. This will include checking telephone numbers, accuracy of personnel details and any updates required by a change in local or national law or policy.

Procedures

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:

- Not promise confidentiality. You have a duty to share this information and possibly refer to relevant external agencies.
- 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 *e.g. 'Everything will be alright now', 'You'll never have to see that person again'.*
- Reassure and alleviate guilt if the child refers to it. For example, you could say, *'You're not to blame'.*
- Not interrogate the child; it is not your responsibility to investigate.
- Not ask leading questions *e.g. 'Did they touch your private parts?'*, ask open questions such as *'Anything else to tell me?'*
- Not ask the child to repeat the information for another Member.
- Explain what you must do next and who you must 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.
- Not contact the alleged abuser.
- Ring 999 if the person is injured or there is an immediate or urgent risk of harm.

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

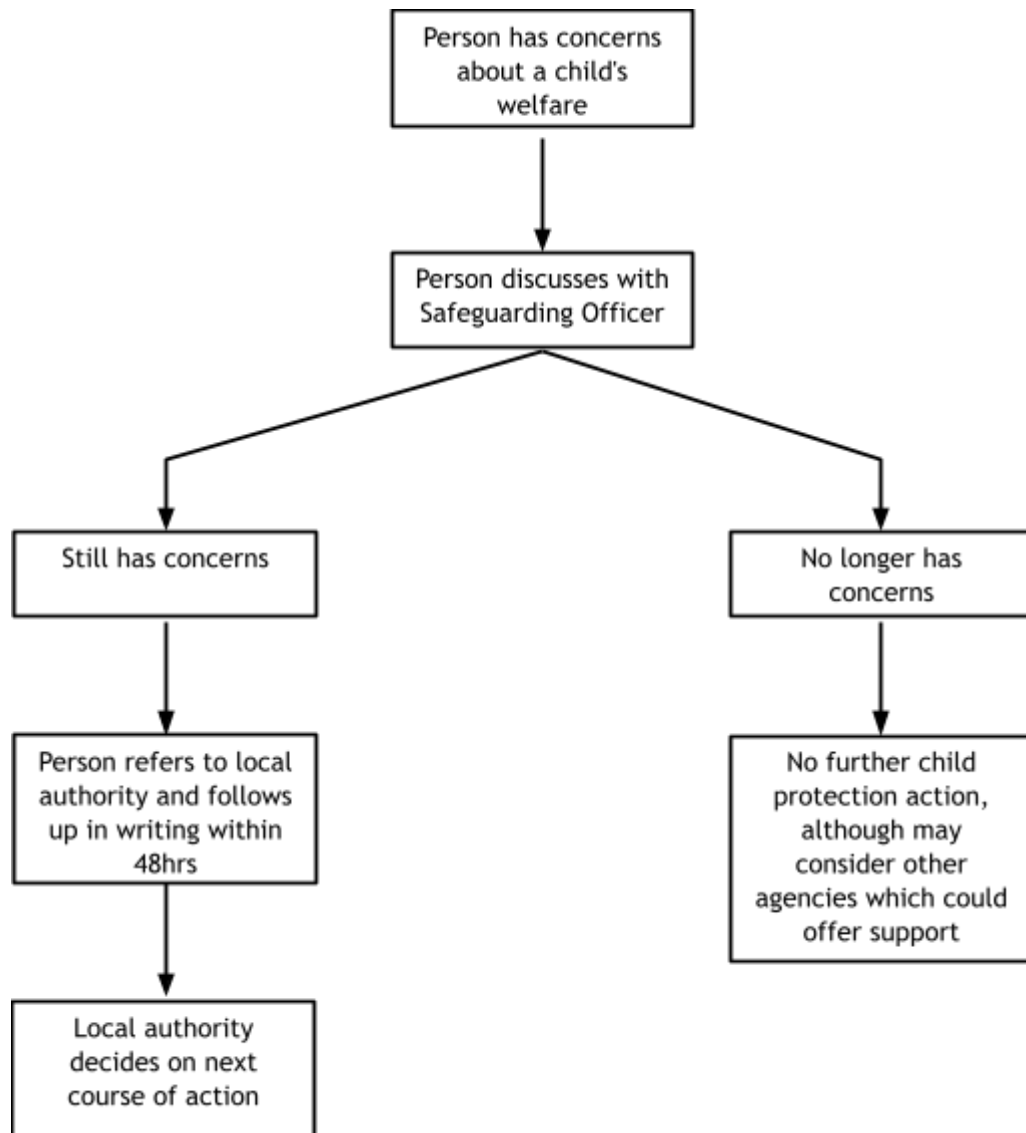
If you still have concerns, you or the Safeguarding Officer should refer to the relevant agency as detailed in the Contacts section of this policy.

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.

You should follow up the verbal referral in writing, within 48 hours.

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



Allegations Involving a Member, Agent or Representative

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 the 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 they are unsuitable to work with children.

The allegations may relate to the person's 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 the Local Authority or further internal action is appropriate.

Some allegations will be so serious as to require immediate referral to the Local Authority and 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 cause 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.

Some allegations may be less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by the Local Authority. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation. Consequently, the Safeguarding Officer should be informed of all allegations that come to a Member's attention and appear to come within the scope of this procedure so that he or she can consult police and the Local Authority 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 the Local Authority's children's social care services as to whether the child is in need of protection or in need of services;
- 3) Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

Safeguarding Adults at Risk

Policy

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:

Safeguarding adults at risk is a part of the wider role of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific adults at risk who are suffering or are at

risk of suffering significant harm. As adults and/or professionals or volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard adults at risk and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults at risk (protecting them from significant harm) depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Some of the most vulnerable adults and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including justice services.

For those adults at risk who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote their welfare and, where necessary, to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against them.

All Members should:

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

Procedures

For reasons of consistency and practicality, the Band's procedures for safeguarding adults at risk will be the same as those for safeguarding children and young people except where the law, or the specific circumstances of an individual's need require otherwise.

Contacts

Children and young people: Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), 0345 155 1071, mashsecure@devon.gov.uk

Adults: Care Direct, 0345 155 1007 (8am to 8pm Monday to Friday, and 9am to 1pm on Saturdays) or 0345 600 0388 (Emergency Duty Service outside the above hours or on a bank holiday), csc.caredirect@devon.gov.uk

Implementation and Review

Following Committee approval this policy is implemented on 21/10/2025 and will be reviewed no later than 12 months from this date.