



ESCAPE Family Support

Safeguarding Adults Policy

Policy Owner: ESCAPE Family Support Ltd
Policy approved by : Board Chair on behalf of Board of Trustees
Date Policy approved: 22nd August 2025
Next Review date: 22nd August 2026

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Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction	3
About Escape and our approach	3
Policy Statement	4
Purpose	4
Scope	4
Commitments	5
Implementation	6
Section 2: Supporting Information	7
Key Points	7
Safeguarding Adults Legislation	8
Definition of an Adult at Risk and Safeguarding principles	9
Abuse and Neglect.....	10
Signs and Indicators of Abuse and Neglect	11
Key Elements of an Online Safety and AI Safeguarding	12
Photography	12
Wellbeing Principle	12
Person Centred Safeguarding/ Making Safeguarding Personal	13
Mental Capacity and Decision Making.....	13
Recording and Information Sharing.....	15
Multi-Agency Working.....	16
Partnership Working	17
Section 3: Appendices.....	18
Appendix 1 - Role Description: Designated Safeguarding Lead	18
Appendix 2 - Case Management Group	19
Appendix 3 – Adult Safeguarding Procedure.....	20
Appendix 4- Sources of Information and Support	28

Section 1: Introduction

About Escape and our approach

ESCAPE Family Support is a registered Charity and Company Limited by guarantee that provides a comprehensive range of services to support families, carers, partners, young people, children, and others affected by a loved one's substance use. Within our holistic, enabling approach we also work with substance users themselves as part of our family and parenting programmes. We tailor our open access services to the needs of the individual.

ESCAPE Family Support is committed to Safeguarding Adults in line with national legislation and relevant national and local guidelines.

We will safeguard adults by ensuring that our services and activities are delivered in a way which keeps all adults safe.

ESCAPE Family Support is committed to creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm to adults which necessitates: the recognition of adults who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk; knowing how adult abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself; and being willing to report safeguarding concerns.

This extends to recognising and reporting harm experienced anywhere, including within our own services and activities. But also any other context where services and activities are provided (be they for instance statutory, voluntary or in a private setting), such as the community, in care settings or a person's own home. We will notify appropriate agencies if abuse is suspected, identified, or reported.

ESCAPE Family Support is committed to best safeguarding practice and to uphold the rights of all adults to live a life free from harm from abuse, exploitation, and neglect.

Policy Statement

ESCAPE Family Support believes everyone has the right to live free from abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender identity or expression.

ESCAPE Family Support is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution. Staff will be given support and afforded protection, if necessary, in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, updated 2020.

ESCAPE Family Support acknowledges that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and is committed to prevent abuse and neglect through safeguarding the welfare of all adults involved.

ESCAPE Family Support recognises that health, well-being, ability, disability, and need for care and support can here affect a person's resilience. We recognise that some people experience barriers, for example, to communication in raising concerns or seeking help. We recognise that these factors can vary at different points in people's lives.

ESCAPE Family Support recognises that there is a legal framework within which we need to work to safeguard adults who have needs for care and support, and for protecting those who are unable to take action to protect themselves. We will act in accordance with the relevant safeguarding adult legislation and with local statutory safeguarding procedures.

Actions taken by ESCAPE Family Support will be consistent with the principles of adult safeguarding ensuring that any action taken is prompt, proportionate and that it includes and respects the voice of the adult concerned.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the commitment of ESCAPE Family Support to safeguarding adults and to ensure that everyone involved in ESCAPE Family Support is aware of:

- The legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding adults.
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults.
- What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult within the organisation.

Scope

This safeguarding adult policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals involved in ESCAPE Family Support. This includes Board members, Staff, Volunteers, Student Placements, Beneficiaries, Visitors and pertains to all concerns about the safety of adults whilst taking part in our organisation, its services, activities and in the wider community.

We expect our partner organisations, including for example, suppliers and other VCS agencies we co-deliver with, to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice as set out in this Safeguarding Adults Policy and associated procedures.

Commitments

In order to implement this policy ESCAPE Family Support will ensure that:

- Everyone involved with ESCAPE Family Support is aware of the safeguarding adult procedures and knows what to do and who to contact if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult.
- Any concern that an adult is not safe is taken seriously, responded to promptly, and followed up in line with ESCAPE Family Support's Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures. We will support and where possible secure the safety of individuals and ensure that all referrals to services have full information in relation to identified risk and vulnerability.
- The well-being of those at risk of harm will be put first and the adult actively supported to communicate their views and the outcomes they want to achieve. Those views and wishes will be respected and supported unless there are overriding reasons not to (see the Safeguarding Adults Procedures).
- Any actions taken will respect the rights and dignity of all those involved and be proportionate to the risk of harm.
- Confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored in line with our Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- ESCAPE Family Support acts in accordance with best practice advice, for example, from Northumberland County Council Safeguarding Board, NSPCC, BACP, NCVO, Charity Commission, National Bodies.
- ESCAPE Family Support will cooperate with the Police and the relevant Local Authorities in taking action to safeguard an adult.
- All Board members, staff, volunteers and student placements understand their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults and have completed and are up to date with safeguarding adult training and learning opportunities appropriate for their role.
- ESCAPE Family Support uses safe recruitment practices and continually assesses the suitability of staff, volunteers and student placements to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals in this organisation. DBS checks are undertaken for Trustees, staff, volunteers, student placements and employees that have access to or work with adults at risk of harm.
- ESCAPE Family Support shares information about anyone found to be a risk to adults with the appropriate bodies. For example: Disclosure and Barring Service, Services, Police, Local Authority/Social Services.

- When planning services, activities and events ESCAPE Family Support includes an assessment of, and risk to, the safety of all adults from abuse and neglect and designates a person who will be in attendance as a safeguarding lead for that event.
- Actions taken under this policy are reviewed by the Board and senior management team on a quarterly basis.
- This policy, related policies (see below) and the Safeguarding Adults Procedures are reviewed on an annual basis and whenever there are changes in relevant legislation and/or government guidance as required by the Local Safeguarding Board, BACP or National Bodies and as a result of any other significant change or event.

Implementation

ESCAPE Family Support is committed to developing and maintaining its capability to implement this policy and procedures. In order to do so the following will be in place:

- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for the safety and welfare of all adults.
- Access to relevant legal and professional advice.
- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (see Appendix 1).
- A delegated Safeguarding Lead for satellite service delivery/events and trips (trained designated lead – service manager/deputy CEO is responsible for delegating a safeguarding lead, as all staff are trained in safeguarding annually)
- A standing Case Management Group with an appointed Chair (Deputy CEO/Service Manager - Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for clear Terms of Reference. (see Appendix 2).
- Regular management reports to the Operations, Policy & Safeguarding (OPS) and the Board detailing how risks to adult safeguarding are being addressed and how any reported incidents have been addressed.
- Safeguarding adult procedures that deal effectively with any concerns of abuse or neglect, including those caused through poor practice. (See Appendix 3)
- A process for forming a Case Management Group on a case-by-case basis within clear terms of reference.
- Arrangements to work effectively with other relevant organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults, including arrangements for sharing information.
- Codes of conduct for Board members, Staff, Volunteers, Student Placements, Beneficiaries and other relevant individuals that specify zero tolerance of abuse in any form.
- Risk assessments that specifically include safeguarding of adults.
- Policies and procedures that address the following areas and which are consistent with this Safeguarding Adults policy are located in the Staff Handbook.

✓ Children Safeguarding	✓ Code of Conducts and a process for breach of these – Trustees, Staff, Volunteers, Student Placements, Beneficiaries and Visitors
✓ Harassment & Bullying	✓ Disciplinary Rules and Procedures
✓ Social Media	✓ Grievance Procedure
✓ Electronic Information and Communications Systems Policy	✓ Concerns, Complaints and Compliments
✓ Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy	
✓ Risk register	
✓ Risk assessments	

- ✓ Whistleblowing
- ✓ Recruitment policy - safe recruitment and selection of Trustees, Staff, Volunteers, Student placements)

- ✓ Contract compliance
- ✓ Confidentiality, Record Keeping, Data Protection, and Information Sharing Policies

Section 2: Supporting Information

Key Points

- There is a **legal duty on Local Authorities** to provide support to 'adults at risk'.
- **Adults at risk** are defined in legislation and the criteria applied differs between each home nation. (See definitions on page 12).
- The safeguarding legislation applies **to all forms of abuse** that harm a person's well-being.
- The law provides a framework for good practice in safeguarding that makes the overall **well-being** of the adult at risk a priority of any intervention.
- The law in England emphasises the importance of **person-centred safeguarding**, (referred to as '**Making Safeguarding Personal**' in England).
- The law provides a framework for making decisions on behalf of adults who can't make decisions for themselves (**Mental Capacity**).
- The law provides a framework for organisations to **share concerns** they have about adults at risk with the local authority.
- The law provides a framework for all organisations to **share information and cooperate** to protect adults at risk.

Safeguarding Adults Legislation

Safeguarding Adults in England is compliant with United Nations directives on the rights of disabled people and commitments to the rights of older people. It is covered by:

- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 2018

The practices and procedures within this policy are based on the relevant legislation and government guidance.

- England - The Care Act 2014
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance (especially chapter 14)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006/ Disclosure & Barring Service 2013
- Making Safeguarding Personal Guide 2014

Many other pieces of UK legislation also affect adult safeguarding.

These include legislation about different forms of abuse and those that govern information sharing. For example, legislation dealing with:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| • Murder/attempted murder | • Modern slavery and Human exploitation |
| • Physical Assault | • Hate crime |
| • Sexual Offences | • Harassment |
| • Domestic Abuse/Coercive control | • Assisted or encouraged self harm |
| • Forced Marriage | • Professional boundaries |
| • Female Genital Mutilation | • Listing and Barring of those unsuitable to work with adults with care and support needs |
| • Theft and Fraud | |

England has legislation about the circumstances in which decisions can be made on behalf of an adult who is unable to make decisions for themselves:

- England and Wales - Mental Capacity Act 2005

There are specific offences applying to the mistreatment of and sexual offences against adults who do not have Mental Capacity and specific offences where mistreatment is carried out by a person who is employed as a carer e.g., wilful neglect and wilful mistreatment.

Definition of an Adult at Risk and Safeguarding principles

An **adult at risk** is an individual aged 18 years and over who:

(a) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs),

(b) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and

(c) 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)

The Safeguarding Adults legislation creates specific responsibilities on Local Authorities, Health, and the Police to provide additional protection from abuse and neglect to Adults at Risk. Underpinning all aspects of safeguarding work, are the following principles:

- **Empowerment** - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
- **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding

When a Local Authority has reason to believe there is an adult at risk, they have a responsibility to find out more about the situation and decide what actions need to be taken to support the adult. The actions that need to be taken might be by the Local Authority (usually social services) and/or by other agencies, for example the Police and Health. ESCAPE Family Support may need to take action as part of safeguarding an adult, for example, to use the disciplinary procedures in relation to a trustee, member of staff, volunteer, student placement or beneficiary who has been reported to be harming a participant.

ESCAPE has a responsibility to notify the local authority if something comes to our attention regarding the safeguarding of an adult. The Local Authority role includes having multi-agency procedures which coordinate the actions taken by different organisations to safeguard an individual

Abuse and Neglect

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. Any or all of the following types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence, omission or ignorance.

There are different types and patterns of abuse and neglect and different circumstances in which they may take place.

Safeguarding legislation in England includes the following types of abuse:

- Physical
- Domestic
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Financial
- Modern Slavery
- Discrimination
- Organisational
- Neglect and Acts of Omission
- Self-neglect
- Radicalisation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-policy-protecting-vulnerable-adults/sd8-opgs-safeguarding-policy#what-is-abuse>

Abuse can take place in any relationship and there are many contexts in which abuse might take place; e.g., Institutional abuse, Domestic Abuse, Forced Marriage, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, Female Genital Mutilation, Sexual Exploitation, County Lines, Radicalisation, Extremism, Hate Crime, Mate Crime (Disability Hate Crime), Cyber bullying, Scams. Some of these are named specifically within England's legislation.

Abuse can take place within a service delivery context and the person causing harm might be any other person. For example: a trustee, member of staff, volunteer, student placement, another beneficiary or a visitor.

Some examples of abuse within service delivery include:

- Harassment of a beneficiary because of their (perceived) disability or other protected characteristics.
- Not meeting the needs of the beneficiary e.g., training or programme without a necessary break.
- One beneficiary controlling another beneficiary with threatening or coercive behaviours
- Anyone involved with ESCAPE who sends unwanted sexually explicit messages or images via telephone or online messaging to a beneficiary.
- A beneficiary threatens another beneficiary with physical harm.

Abuse or neglect external to ESCAPE Family Support's services could be carried out by, but is not limited to:

- A spouse, partner or family member
- Neighbours or residents
- Friends, acquaintances or strangers
- People who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable
- Paid staff, professionals or volunteers from other organisations providing additional care, support or interventions
- Strangers

Often the perpetrator is known to the adult and may be in a position of trust and/or power.

Signs and Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

An adult may confide to a trustee, member of staff, volunteer, student placement or another beneficiary that they are experiencing abuse inside or outside of the organisation's setting. Similarly, others may suspect that this is the case.

There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused or neglected. There may be other explanations, but they should not be ignored. The signs and symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention when an injury is present.
- Person has belongings or money going missing.
- Person is not attending / no longer enjoying their sessions. You may notice that a beneficiary in a group has been missing from sessions and is not responding to reminders from course leader or other beneficiaries.
- Someone losing or gaining weight / an unkempt appearance. This could be a beneficiary whose appearance becomes unkempt, does not wear appropriate clothing and there is a deterioration in hygiene.
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person. For example, a beneficiary may be looking quiet, withdrawn, or nervous when a family member or friend comes to meet them from sessions in contrast to their interactions with their keyworker.
- Self-harm.
- A fear of a particular group of people or individual.
- A parent, partner/carer always speaks for the person and doesn't allow them to make their own choices.
- They may tell you / another person they are being abused – i.e. a disclosure.

Key Elements of an Online Safety and AI Safeguarding

To Inform all users about the risks and limitations of AI, including the potential for fake content and biased information.

To provide training for staff in online safety in their roles and how to address related safeguarding concerns

Escape implements and maintains appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to block harmful content, detect threats and identify misuse of tools and ensures products and platforms are reliable, secure, and robust, with safeguards against adversarial attacks.

Escape recognises that safeguarding is an ongoing process that requires continuous review and adaptation of policies and practices as technology evolves.

Photography

At ESCAPE photographic imagery is used for publications, our website, social media and promotional materials. All imagery is stored on secure systems aligned with UK GDPR and data protection. All photographs require signed consent from ESCAPE's beneficiaries however at anytime an individual has the right to withdraw their consent.

Wellbeing Principle

The concept of 'well-being' is threaded throughout UK legislation and is part of the Law about how health and social care is provided. Our well-being includes our mental and physical health, our relationships, our connection with our communities and our contribution to society.

The wellbeing principle makes it clear that a local authority's duty is to ensure that the wellbeing of individual's must be at the centre of all it does. ESCAPE must act to promote wellbeing whenever it carries out carries our care and support functions for individuals (Care Act 2014).

Being able to live free from abuse and neglect is a key element of well-being.

The legislation recognises that statutory agencies have sometimes acted disproportionately in the past. For example, removing an adult at risk from their own home when there were other ways of preventing harm, to the detriment of that individual's emotional wellbeing. As such any actions taken to safeguard an adult must take their whole well-being into account and be proportionate to the risk of harm.

Person Centred Safeguarding/ Making Safeguarding Personal

The legislation also recognises that adults make choices that may mean that one part of our well-being suffers at the expense of another – for instance if we move away from friends and family to take a better job. Similarly, adults can choose to risk their personal safety; for instance where an individual chooses to continue to provide care to a partner or child with an addiction who becomes abusive when they are under the influence or in withdrawal.

None of us can make these choices for another adult. If we are supporting someone to make choices about their own safety we need to understand what matters to them and what outcomes they want to achieve vis a vis any actions agencies take to help them to protect themselves.

The concept of 'Person Centred Safeguarding'/'Making Safeguarding Personal' means engaging the person in a conversation about how best to respond to their situation in a way that enhances their involvement, choice and control, as well as improving their quality of life, well-being and safety. ESCAPE Family Support works to support adults to achieve the outcomes they want for themselves. The adult's views, wishes, feelings and beliefs must be taken into account when decisions are made about how to support them to be safe. There may be many different ways to prevent further harm. Working with the person will mean that actions taken help them to find the solution that is right for them. Treating people with respect, enhancing their dignity and supporting their ability to make decisions also helps promote people's sense of self-worth and supports recovery from abuse.

If someone has difficulty making their views and wishes known, then they can be supported or represented by an advocate. This might be a safe family member or friend of their choice or a professional advocate.

Mental Capacity and Decision Making

We make many decisions every day, often without realising. UK Law assumes that all people over the age of 16 have the ability to make their own decisions, unless it has been proved that they can't. It also gives us the right to make any decision that we need to make and gives us the right to make our own decisions even if others consider them to be unwise.

We make so many decisions that it is easy to take this ability for granted. The Law says that to make a decision we need to:

- Understand information relevant to the decision
- Remember it for long enough
- Think about the information, including the consequences of the decision
- Communicate our decision

Most adults have the ability to make their own decisions given the right support. However, a person's ability to do this may be affected by things such as learning disability, dementia, mental health needs, acquired brain injury and physical ill health.

For example:

- A person with epilepsy may not be able to make a decision following a seizure.
- Someone who is anxious may not be able to make a decision at that point.
- A person may not be able to respond as quickly if they have just taken some medication that causes fatigue.

Mental capacity refers to the ability to make a specific decision at the time that decision is needed. A person's mental capacity can change. Mental Capacity is important for safeguarding for several reasons:

Not being allowed to make decisions one can make, is itself abuse. For example, a disabled adult may want to take part in an activity but their parent who is their carer won't allow them to and will not provide the support they would need. Conversely the adult may not seem to be benefiting from an activity other people are insisting they do.

Another situation is where an adult is being abused and they are scared of the consequences of going against the views of the person abusing them. It is recognised in the law as coercion and a person can be seen not to have mental capacity because they cannot make 'free and informed decisions'.

Mental Capacity must also be considered when we believe abuse or neglect might be taking place. It is important to make sure an 'adult at risk' has choices in the actions taken to safeguard them, including whether or not they want other people informed about what has happened, however, in some situations the adult may not have the mental capacity to understand the choice or to tell you, their views.

England has legislation that describes when and how we can make decisions for people who are unable to make decisions for themselves. The principles are the same.

- We can only make decisions for other people if they cannot do that for themselves at the time the decision is needed.
- If the decision can wait, wait – e.g., to get help to help the person make their decision or until they can make it themselves.
- If we have to make a decision for someone else then we must make the decision in their best interests (for their benefit) and take into account what we know about their preferences and wishes.
- If the action we are taking to keep people safe will restrict them then we must think of the way to do that which restricts to their freedom and rights as little as possible.

Many potential difficulties with making decisions can be overcome with preparation. If it is safe/possible, wait until they are able to be involved in decision making or are able to make the decision themselves. A person needing support to help them make decisions whilst attending service delivery programmes will ordinarily be accompanied by someone e.g., a family member or formal carer whose role includes supporting them to make decisions.

It is good practice to get as much information about the person as possible. Some people with care and support needs will have a 'One page profile' or a 'This is me' document that describes important things about them. Some of those things will be about how to support

the person, their routines, food and drink choices etc, it will also include things they like and don't like doing. It's also important to have an agreement with the person who has referred and/or accompanied the adult to ESCAPE Family Support's services about how different types of decisions will be made on a day-to-day basis.

If a person who has a lot of difficulty making their own decisions is thought to be being abused or neglected you will need to refer the situation to the Local Authority, and this should result in health or social care professionals making an assessment of mental capacity and/or getting the person the support, they need to make decisions.

There may be times when ESCAPE Family Support needs to make decisions on behalf of an individual in an emergency. Decisions taken to safeguard an adult who cannot make the decision for themselves could include:

- Sharing information about safeguarding concerns with relevant people or organisations that can help protect them.
- Stopping them being in contact with the person causing harm.

Recording and Information Sharing

ESCAPE Family Support must comply with the Data Protection Act (DPA) and the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR).

Information about concerns of abuse includes personal data. It is therefore important to be clear as to the grounds for processing and sharing information about concerns of abuse.

Processing information includes record keeping. Records relating to safeguarding concerns must be accurate and relevant. They must be stored confidentially with access only to those with a need to know.

Sharing information, with the right people, is central to good practice in safeguarding adults. However, information sharing must only ever be with those with a 'need to know'. This does **NOT** automatically include the persons spouse, partner, adult, child, unpaid or paid carer. Information should only be shared with family and friends and/or carers with the consent of the adult or if the adult does not have capacity to make that decision and family/ friends/ carers need to know in order to help keep the person safe.

The purpose of Data Protection legislation is not to prevent information sharing but to ensure personal information is only shared appropriately. Data protection legislation allows information sharing within an organisation. For example:

- Anyone who has a concern about harm can make a report to an appropriate person within the same organisation
- Case management meetings will take place to agree to co-ordinate actions by ESCAPE Family Support.

There are also many situations in which it is perfectly legal to share information about adult safeguarding concerns outside the organisation. Importantly personal information can be shared with the consent of the adult concerned. However, the adult may not always want information to be shared. This may be because they fear repercussions from the person causing harm or are scared that they will lose control of their situation to statutory bodies or because they feel stupid or embarrassed. Their wishes should be respected unless

there are over-riding reasons for sharing information.

The circumstances when we need to share information without the adult's consent include those where:

- it is not safe to contact the adult to gain their consent – i.e., it might put them or the person making contact at further risk.
- you believe they or someone else is at risk, including children.
- you believe the adult is being coerced or is under duress.
- it is necessary to contact the police to prevent a crime, or to report that a serious crime has been committed.
- the adult does not have mental capacity to consent to information being shared about them.
- the person causing harm has care and support needs.
- the concerns are about an adult at risk

When information is shared without the consent of the adult this must be explained to them, when it is safe to do so, and any further actions should still fully include them.

If you are in doubt as to whether to share information seek advice e.g. seek legal advice and/or contact the Local Authority and explain the situation without giving personal details about the person at risk or the person causing harm.

Any decision to share or not to share information with an external person or organisation must be recorded together with the reasons. If someone seeks legal advice or advice of the local authority, a copy of this advice should be retained in case this information needs sharing

Safeguarding Adult referrals should be made using the Safeguarding Adult Enquiry Form available at: <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Care/safeguarding.aspx>

Multi-Agency Working

Safeguarding adults legislation gives the lead role for adult safeguarding to the Local Authority. However, it is recognised that safeguarding can involve a wide range of organisations.

ESCAPE Family Support may need to cooperate with the Local Authority and the Police including to:

- Provide more information about the concern you have raised.
- Provide a safe venue for the adult to meet with other professionals e.g., Police/Social Workers/Advocates.
- Attend safeguarding meetings.
- Coordinate internal investigations (e.g., complaints, disciplinary) with investigations by the police or other agencies.
- Share information about the outcomes of internal investigations.
- Provide a safe environment for the adult to continue their support programmes or their role in the organisation.

Partnership Working

- Establish clear communication with all partnership agencies
- Define roles and responsibilities of each agency within the Safeguarding process
- Share information effectively when needed
- Develop an understanding of risk to avoid misinterpretation
- To utilise ESCAPE safeguarding forms for reporting
- To report to Children Services any Safeguarding concerns

Section 3: Appendices

Appendix 1 – Role Description: Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has primary responsibility for putting into place procedures to safeguard adults at risk, supporting Delegated Safeguarding Leads where relevant and for managing concerns about adults at risk.

ESCAPE Safeguarding lead (Angie Turnbull) 07812983611 Deputy Safeguarding Lead 07812983609 (Jennie Clark)

Duties and responsibilities include:

- Working with others within the organisation to create a positive inclusive environment within service delivery.
- Play a lead role in developing and establishing the organisation's approach to safeguarding adults and in maintaining and reviewing the organisation's implementation plan for safeguarding adults in line with current legislation and best practice.
- Coordinate the dissemination of the safeguarding adult policy, procedures and resources throughout the organisation.
- Contribute to ensuring other policies and procedures are consistent with ESCAPE Family Support's commitment to safeguarding adults.
- Advise on the organisation's training needs and the development of its training strategy.
- Receive reports of and manage cases of poor practice and abuse reported to the organisation – including an appropriate recording system.
- To Chair Case Management Groups and co-ordinate the case management process, provide reports and report concerns to the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Operations, Policy & Safeguarding (OPS).
- Manage liaison with, and referrals to, external agencies for example adult social-care services and the police.
- Create a central point of contact for internal and external individuals and agencies concerned about the safety of adults within the organisation.
- Provide advice and support to ESCAPE Family Support's delegated safeguarding leads and play a lead role in their recruitment, selection and training to their main role within ESCAPE.
- Represent the organisation at external meetings related to safeguarding.

Appendix 2 – Case Management Group

The Case Management Group will be led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will comprise of a select number of individuals with identified and relevant skills, knowledge experience and/or status within the organisation and include at least one member with safeguarding adult expertise. The group's role and decision-making powers are embedded within the organisation's governance structure and are linked to related organisational functions such as codes of conduct, and the disciplinary policy and procedures.

The Operations, Policy & Safeguarding (OPS) and ESCAPE Family Support's Board should receive regular reports from the Chair of the Case Management Group summarising the cases that have been addressed and their outcomes, as well as any issues that require action by ESCAPE Family Support e.g., changes to policy or procedures. The Operations, Policy & Safeguarding (OPS) will ratify any actions already taken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Case Management Group will have clear terms of reference. They will meet at least monthly or can be brought together as the need arises.

Case Management Group duties include:

- to initially assess and agree immediate response to a safeguarding case which includes an allegation against or poor practice (does there appear to be a case to answer?).
- to identify appropriate 'route' for case (e.g., internal/ disciplinary action alone or referral to statutory agencies plus internal/ disciplinary action).
- to decide the level at which the organisation will deal with the concern.
- to consider the need for temporary/ interim suspension and make recommendations to the investigating officer).
- to review progress of case(s).
- to identify/ communicate learning from cases.

Case Management Group membership should include:

- A designated Chair (Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- A Secretary (Administration Officer or Senior Staff Member)
- A trustee with Safeguarding Adults expertise
- Senior Staff from relevant parts of the organisation
- Relevant Keyworker
- Co-opted independent safeguarding expertise (e.g., from another relevant profession such as another social care provider, the Police or Social services).

Appendix 3 – Adult Safeguarding

Procedure

Rights & responsibilities

Responsibilities of ESCAPE

- To ensure all Board members, staff, volunteers and student placements are aware of the adult safeguarding policy and are adequately trained
- To notify the appropriate agencies if abuse is identified, reported or suspected
- To support and where possible secure the safety of individuals and ensure that all referrals to services have full information in relation to identified risk and vulnerability
- To DBS check all Board members, staff, volunteers and student placements that have access to or work with adults at risk of harm

Responsibilities of all Board members, staff, volunteers and student placements

- To be familiar with the adult safeguarding policy and procedures
- To take appropriate action in line with the policies of ESCAPE
- To declare any existing or subsequent convictions. Failure to do so will be regarded as gross misconduct, possibly resulting in dismissal

Support for those who report abuse

All those making a complaint or allegation or expressing concern, whether they be board members, staff, volunteers and student placements paid or unpaid or members of the general public should be reassured that:

- They will be taken seriously
- Their comments will usually be treated confidentially, but their concerns may be shared if they or others are at significant risk
- If service users, they will be given immediate protection from the risk of reprisals or intimidation
- If staff they will be given support and afforded protection, if necessary, in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, updated 2020.

The adult at risk of harm has the right:

- To be made aware of this policy
- To have alleged incidents recognised and taken seriously
- To receive fair and respectful treatment throughout
- To be involved in any process as appropriate
- To receive information about the outcome
- Complain if they feel their concern hasn't been followed up or ignored

Management and Supervision

It is the line manager's responsibility to clarify with the worker or volunteer their roles and responsibilities regarding their relationships with adults at risk of harm with whom they may be in contact. Regular supervision for staff, volunteers and student placements will monitor the work and offer the opportunity to raise any issues.

Record Keeping

- There should be a written record of any concerns. This confidential information will be kept in a locked drawer by the appropriate person and will be kept for as long as deemed necessary, in line with Data Protection principles. (See Record Keeping, Confidentiality & Data Protection Policies)
- If not acted on immediately, all incidents should be discussed in supervision with line manager.
- Records kept by paid/unpaid workers about adults at risk of harm should only include:
 - (a) Contacts made
 - (b) Referrals made, including date, time, reason, and referral agency

Planning

Wherever possible all Board members, staff, volunteers and student placements should avoid lone working with an adult at risk of harm. But if unavoidable, one to one contact should take place in an environment where other staff or volunteers are present or within sight. (Further guidance can be found in the Lone Working Policy and the Health & Safety Policy)

Access to an independent person

Any adult at risk of harm who comes into contact with ESCAPE board members, staff, volunteers and student placements regularly, should be given information on their right to talk with an independent person, and their name and contact arrangements. This forms part of the normal registration process.

The independent person for ESCAPE is:

Safeguarding Adults Team 01670 622 683 (team administrator) Please note that this is for general advice only.

Senior Contact: Safeguarding Adults Board please contact Karen Wright - 07779983138 Senior Manager Safeguarding Adults

What to do

To act or not to act:

All allegations or suspicions are to be treated seriously. No abuse is acceptable, and some abuse is a criminal offence and must be reported to the Police as soon as possible.

To determine the appropriate action, it is important to consider:

Risk – does the adult at risk of harm, staff member, volunteer or student placement or understand the nature and consequences of any risk they may be subject to, and do they willingly accept such a risk?

Self-determination – is the adult at risk of harm able to make their own decisions and choices, and do they wish to do so

Seriousness – A number of factors will determine whether intervention is required. The perception of the victim must be the starting point. Factors informing assessment of seriousness will include:

- The **perception** by the individual and their **vulnerability**
- The **extent** of the abuse
- The **length of time** it has been going on
- The **impact** on the individual
- The risk of **repetition** or **escalation** involving this or other adults at risk of harm
- Is a **criminal offence** being committed?

The employee, volunteer or student placement's primary responsibility is to protect the adult at risk of harm if they are at risk.

Each employee, volunteer or student placement has a duty to take action.

Employees, volunteers, and student placements should not have to cope alone.

Actions and considerations

THE FIRST PRIORITY SHOULD ALWAYS BE TO ENSURE THE SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF ADULTS AT RISK OF HARM. TO THIS END IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL STAFF TO ACT ON ANY SUSPICION OR EVIDENCE OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT AND TO PASS ON THEIR CONCERNS TO A RESPONSIBLE PERSON OR AGENCY.

In situations of immediate danger, take urgent action by calling the relevant emergency services (e.g., Police, Ambulance, GP).

- Remember to have regard to your own safety. Leave the situation if it is not safe for you.
- Listen to the adult at risk of harm, offer necessary support and reassurance.
- Issues of confidentiality must be clarified early on. For example: staff, volunteers or student placements must make it clear that they will have to discuss the concerns with their supervisor.
- Where an adult at risk of harm expresses a wish for concerns not to be pursued then this should be respected wherever possible. However, decisions about whether to respect the service user's wishes must have regard to the level of risk to the individual and others, and their capacity to understand the decision in question. In some circumstances the wishes of the adult at risk of harm may be overridden in favour of considerations of safety.
- Decisions to override the wishes of the adult at risk of harm not to take the matter further should if possible be the product of discussion with appropriate line management.
- Note your concerns and any information given to you or witnessed by you.

- Report concerns to the appropriate line manager.

REMEMBER IT IS NOT NECESSARY OR ADVISABLE FOR YOU TO SEEK EVIDENCE. By supporting the adult at risk of harm and carefully logging any information given to you at this stage, you will lay the foundations for an effective formal investigation.

Understand the need not to contaminate, or to preserve evidence if a crime may have been committed.

Discussion and decision making

INFORMATION SHOULD BE SHARED WITH THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD, WHO MUST APPROVE ANY ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AND ANY DOCUMENTATION OR CORRESPONDENCE BEING SENT OUT.

- Employees with concerns should discuss them with their line manager on the same day.
- If the line manager is not available, then any concerns should be discussed with the Chief Executive or their Deputy.
- Volunteers or student placements with concerns should discuss these discreetly with their co-ordinator or Line Manager as soon as possible after the abuse or suspicions of abuse are observed. If unavailable then any concerns should be discussed with the Chief Executive of ESCAPE, or their Deputy.
- Concerns about colleagues. These should be addressed initially with the Line Manager, but if this is not possible or the concern is about the Line Manager or other Senior member of staff, then any concerns should be discussed with the Chief Executive.

To refer or not to refer

THE DECISION TO REFER OR NOT TO REFER SHOULD BE MADE BY THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE SHOULD BE INFORMED.

When considering the decision as to whether to refer elsewhere (e.g., to Police, Social Services, National Care Standards Commission) the following should be taken into account:

- The wishes of the adult at risk of harm & their right to self-determination
- The mental capacity of the adult at risk of harm
- Known indicators of abuse
- Definitions of abuse
- Level of risk to this individual
- The seriousness of the abuse
- The effect of the abuse on the individual
- Level of risk to others
- The effect of the abuse on others
- Whether a criminal offence has been committed
- Whether other statutory obligations have been breached (e.g., NCSC)
- The need for others to know

- The ability of others (e.g., Police, Social Services) to make a positive contribution to the situation

Issues of mental capacity & consent

The consent of the adult at risk of harm must be obtained except where:

- The adult at risk of harm lacks the mental capacity to make a decision, and a risk assessment indicates that referral would be in their best interests
- Others may be at risk
- A crime has been committed

INFORMATION, IF KNOWN, WHICH WILL BE REQUIRED WHEN YOU MAKE A REFERRAL OR REPORT YOUR CONCERNS:

- Details of alleged victim – name, date of birth, address, age, sex, gender identity, ethnic background including principal language spoken, details of any disability
- Details of GP and any known medication
- Whether the individual is aware of and has consented to the referral/report.
- The mental capacity of the individual (are there any concerns/doubts about this?)
- If appropriate, advise the agency on preferred/advised method or environment when approaching the alleged victim or perpetrator.

Also, any relevant information, for example:

- Reasons for concerns and therefore this referral
- Details of how these concerns came to light
- Specific information relating to these concerns
- Details of any arrangements which have already been made for the protection of the adult at risk of harm or any immediate action taken
- Details of anyone else to whom this referral has also been made
- Details of the alleged perpetrator and if they are an adult at risk of harm
- Details of alleged abuse and information about suspicions
- Details of any other background information
- An impression of how serious the situation might be
- Details of any other professional involved
- Details of carers and any significant family members, neighbours, friends

INFORMATION PASSED ON MUST BE RELEVANT, NECESSARY AND UP TO DATE. CONFIRM IN WRITING INFORMATION IF GIVEN VERBALLY.

Additional Guidance:

Dos and Don'ts

Staff member, volunteer or student placement should:

- Stay Calm
- Listen patiently
- Reassure the person they are doing the right thing by telling you
- Explain what you are going to do

- Report to relevant Manager
- Write a factual account of what you have seen, heard immediately.

Staff member, volunteer or student placements should not:

- Appear shocked, horrified, disgusted or angry
- Press the individual for details (unless requested to do so)
- Make comments or judgements other than to show concern
- Promise to keep secrets
- Confront the alleged abuser
- Risk contaminating evidence

Discuss with the Relevant Manager who will:

- Ascertain whether the situation might fall within the definitions of abuse outlined in this policy
- Consider the capacity of the adult at risk of harm to make decisions
- Ascertain whether an advocate or appropriate adult might be necessary
- Ascertain any immediate action required
- Ascertain whether an investigation is necessary in accordance with internal personnel policies and procedures
- Where abuse is suspected conclude that a referral be made to the appropriate agency

Reporting Concerns about yourself:

- If you are in immediate danger or need immediate medical assistance, contact the emergency services 999.
- Please contact the Designate Safeguarding Lead. If you would prefer, please contact another member of staff who will help you raise the issue to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- If the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Welfare Officer is implicated or you think has a conflict of interest, then report to the ESCAPE Chief Executive/Officer.
- You can also contact the Police, Social Services, your doctor or other organisations that can provide information and give help and support (see Appendix 4: Other Sources of Support).
- ESCAPE will follow the procedure in this document. If you do not think your concerns are being addressed in the way that they should be please contact the Chief Executive/Officer or a member of the ESCAPE Board.
- At all stages you are welcome to have someone who you trust support you and help you to explain what happened and what you want to happen.
- It is of upmost importance to ESCAPE that you can take part in our activities safely and we will take every step to support you to do that.

You have a concern, or have been told about, possible abuse of someone else, poor practice or wider welfare issues*.

Is the person in immediate danger or need immediate medical attention?

No

Yes

Seek medical attention or contact
emergency services **999**

Is a serious crime in progress or been committed?

No

Yes

Contact the police
999

Is it safe to speak with the adult? / What does the adult want to happen? / If you know their views include those throughout the process.

Speak to your Designated Safeguarding Lead and report your concerns without delay.
Update the safeguarding log within 48 hours.
If you have concerns that they are implicated or may not act appropriately contact
ESCAPE CEO.

Make notes and complete a Safeguarding Adult Enquiry Form submit to the
Northumberland Children & Adults Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP)
Links: <https://beta.northumberland.gov.uk/adult-social-care/adults-safeguarding>
<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk>

Appendix 4– Sources of Information and Support

Northumberland Safeguarding Board:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Care/Support/Safeguarding.aspx>

Victim Support

Provides practical advice and help, emotional support and reassurance to those who have suffered the effects of a crime.

Tel: 0808 168 9111

victimsupport.org.uk

National 24Hour Freephone Domestic Abuse Helplines

England
Tel: 0808 2000 247
www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/Contact-us

Women's Aid Federation of England and Wales

Women's Aid is a national domestic violence charity. It also runs a domestic violence online help service.

www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support

Men's Advice Line

For male domestic abuse survivors

Tel: 0808 801 0327

National LGBTQ + Domestic Abuse Helpline

Tel: 0800 999 5428

Action on Elder Abuse

A national organisation based in London. It aims to prevent the abuse of older people by raising awareness, encouraging education, promoting research and collecting and disseminating information.

Tel: 020 8765 7000

Email: enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk

www.elderabuse.org.uk

Rape Crisis Federation of England

Rape Crisis was launched in 1996 and exists to provide a range of facilities and resources to enable the continuance and development of Rape Crisis Groups throughout England.

Email: info@rapecrisis.co.uk

www.rapecrisis.co.uk

Respond

Respond provides a range of services to victims and perpetrators of sexual abuse who have learning disabilities, and training and support to those working with them.

Tel: 020 7383 0700 or

0808 808 0700 (Helpline)
Email: services@respond.org.uk
www.respond.org.uk

Stop Hate Crime

Works to challenge all forms of Hate Crime and discrimination, based on any aspect of an individual's identity. Stop Hate UK provides independent, confidential and accessible reporting and support for victims, witnesses and third parties.

24 hours service:

Telephone: 0800 138 1625

Web Chat: www.stophateuk.org/talk-to-us/

E mail: talk@stophateuk.org

Text: 07717 989 025

By post: PO Box 851, Leeds LS1 9QS

Suzy Lamplugh Trust

The Trust is a leading authority on personal safety. Its role is to minimise the damage caused to individuals and to society by aggression in all its forms – physical, verbal and psychological.

Tel: 020 83921839

Fax: 020 8392 1830

Email: info@suzylamplugh.org

ESCAPE Family Support Safeguarding Contacts:

Contact details of child protection lead: Angie Turnbull

Email: angie.turnbull@escapefamilysupport.org.uk or Mobile Number: 07812 983 611

Contact Details Deputy: Please contact ESCAPE Helpline: 07702 833 944 and speak to the duty manager.

Trustee and Senior Organisation Lead: Alice Park on

Email: alice.park@escapefamilysupport.org.uk

Policy Last Reviewed on: 24th July 2025

Signature of Senior Lead: A. Turnbull

Date: 18/08/2025

Contact ESCAPE Family Support:

Office: 01670 544055

Helpline: 07702833944

or write to

Susan Kennedy Centre

63 South View,

Ashington

Northumberland

NE63 0SF

Acknowledgement: This policy has been developed utilising a template provided by: **The Ann Craft Trust**, Centre for Social Work, University of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG7 2RD

Version: 2025.08