



# Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedure

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## Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedure

Autism Bedfordshire is committed to ensuring that vulnerable people who use our services are not abused and that working practices minimise the risk of such abuse. Staff, trustees and volunteers of Autism Bedfordshire have a duty to identify abuse and report it.

### Definitions

Vulnerable adults are people who are over 18 years of age and are receiving, or may need, services to live in the community. Vulnerable adults may be unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation by other people.

Abuse can include physical, financial, material, sexual, psychological, discriminatory, emotional or neglect issues. Abuse can take place in any setting, such as in their own home, in someone else's home, in a residential setting, in a day centre or public building, at work, in a public place or in a hospital.

The person responsible for the abuse is often well known to the person being abused and can be a relative or friend, a paid or volunteer carer, another service user or a service provider.

### Aim

Autism Bedfordshire aim to provide services to vulnerable adults in a non-discriminatory and safe environment by employing and training staff and volunteers who practice in such an environment using methods and programmes that enable the individual to feel safe and develop and progress towards achieving their full potential.

## Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers working with vulnerable adults are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore will have had to undertake and obtain appropriate DBS (previously known as CRB) clearances, together with at least two references and have undertaken appropriate selection procedures and training.

It is the responsibility of Autism Bedfordshire to ensure that all staff, paid and volunteer, are aware of vulnerable adult's need for protection. They will be made aware of and understand charity policies and procedures in relation to their work, and will be given instruction on how to identify and report such incidents.

## Appointed Safeguarding Officer

Our Appointed Safeguarding Officer, Sharna Raine, is the Director of Adult Services, and takes lead responsibility for coordinating all adult protection activities within the charity. She provides support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and will liaise closely with other services such as the local safeguarding teams, adult social care, health, police, etc. This person has lead responsibility and management oversight for safeguarding adults.

The Appointed Safeguarding Officer is supported by the following Deputy Safeguarding Officers:

Lisa Bowes, Adult Skills Lead

Emily Cullum, Adult Skills Tutor and Support Officer

The Deputy Safeguarding Officer is trained to the same level as the Appointed Safeguarding Officer and will undertake this role operationally with direct oversight and management from the Appointed Safeguarding Officer who maintains lead responsibility.

## Adult Service Users

As part of the programmes of work undertaken whilst with Autism Bedfordshire, all adult service users will be made aware of what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. They will also be made aware of the procedures and processes that are available to them to report such incidents of inappropriate or abusive behaviour and the processes that may follow from such reports. The adults will be given

## Procedures

Any staff member or volunteer who has observed or been made aware of potential or actual abuse should, in the first instance, immediately discuss with their line manager/named person. If they are not immediately available, then another appropriate representative of the organisation (e.g. Adult Skills and Support Lead) should be informed.

Staff have access to have access to a safeguarding timetable which breaks down who to contact and how communications are received.

### Timetable for office

Day of the week	Staff Member	Unable to reach Lead
Monday	Sharna Raine	Emma Reade
Tuesday	Sharna Raine	Lisa Bowes
Wednesday	Sharna Raine	Emma Reade
Thursday	Sharna Raine	Lisa Bowes
Friday	Sharna Raine	Emma Reade

PERSON	Contact Details
Sharna Raine	07951514694 Sharna.raine@autismbeds.org
Lisa Bowes	07366462374 Lisa.bowes@autismbeds.org
Emma Reade	07890756297 Emma.reade@autismbeds.org

In the Instance that Sharna Raine is on annual leave please call Lisa Bowes or Emma Reade as per the table – Sharna Raine will always send an email to the office team to make them aware that is she is on leave and who to contact in her absence if any safeguarding issues do come up.

### Holiday Timetable

(If the adult services manager is off)

Day of the week	Staff Member	Unable to reach Lead
Monday	Emma Reade	Liz McTernan
Tuesday	Lisa Bowes	Emma Reade
Wednesday	Emma Reade	Liz McTernan
Thursday	Lisa Bowes	Lisa Bowes
Friday	Emma Reade	Liz McTernan

PERSON	Contact Details
Sharna Raine	07951514694 Sharna.raine@autismbeds.org
Lisa Bowes	07366462374 Lisa.bowes@autismbeds.org
Emma Reade	07890756297 Emma.reade@autismbeds.org
Liz McTernan	07725444550 Liz.mcternan@autismbeds.org

### Timetable for Evening Social Groups

Day of the week	Staff Member	Unable to reach Lead
Monday	Emily Cullum	Lisa Bowes/Sharna Raine
Tuesday	Emily Cullum	Lisa Bowes/Sharna Raine

Wednesday	Emily Cullum	Lisa Bowes/Sharna Raine
Thursday	Emily Cullum	Lisa Bowes/Sharna Raine
Friday	Emily Cullum	Lisa Bowes/Sharna Raine

PERSON	Contact Details
Emily Cullum	07792794127 Emily.cullum@autismbeds.org
Lisa Bowes	07745540942 Lisa.bowes@autismbeds.org
Sharna Raine	07951514694 Sharna.raine@autismbeds.org

In the Instance that Emily Cullum is on annual leave please call Lisa Bowes or Sharna Raine – Emily Cullum always send an email to the Senior Team Leader to make them aware that is she is on leave and who to contact in her absence if any safeguarding issues do come up.

Any adult wishing to report any concerns should, in the first instance talk to a responsible member of staff. If this is impossible or impractical, they should talk to a trusted member of their family or other responsible adult.

Relevant information, including times, dates, witnesses, person providing information, factual descriptions should be noted as soon as possible after the event and recorded on the appropriate paperwork by the named person.

If abuse is suspected then a referral to Adult Social Services should be made and recorded on salesforce.

Their help line number is **01234 547659** (Bedford Borough), **0300 300 8122** (Central Bedfordshire), and for Luton Borough **01582 276222** (office hours) **0300 3008123**(outside office hours) Milton Keynes 01908 253772 (Office hours) 01908 725005 (outside of hours)

The named person will discuss the concerns with parents/carers in a sensitive and tactful manner, unless the individual would be potentially at greater risk by doing this. In this case, further discussions should take place with social services or the police.

All those making a complaint or allegation or expressing concern, whether they are staff, volunteers, service users, parents, carers or members of the public should be reassured that they will be taken seriously, that their comments will usually be treated confidentially, but their concerns may be shared with the appropriate authorities if they or others are at significant risk.

What you should not do in any such situation is confront the suspected abuser, destroy any evidence, start to investigate the situation yourself, be judgmental, make promises you cannot keep or take the allegations lightly.

## Confidentiality and Recording

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. Information should be stored on salesforce with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Details that should be recorded are as follows:-

- The vulnerable adult's name, date of birth, home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation including dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, what is opinion and what is hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries and any indirect signs or behavioural changes
- Details of witnesses to the incident(s).
- The vulnerable adult's account of what happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Who has been contacted and what was said to them.

## What Happens Next

What happens next will depend upon the wishes of the person and the seriousness of the situation. If the individual is in physical danger, then ensuring their safety is paramount.

In response to the referral, trained staff will carry out a careful and sensitive enquiry. Information and advice will be offered so that the adult and their family can make an informed choice as to what they want to happen next.

Complaints against staff or volunteers can result in three types of investigations, a criminal investigation, an adult protection investigation or a disciplinary/misconduct investigation. Once the allegations are received by any other agency, then the resulting process will follow their own Safeguarding procedures.

These can be found on the following web site:-

<http://www.luton.gov.uk/media%20library/pdf/housing%20&%20social%20services/community%20care/protecting%20vulnerable%20adults/sova%20policy.pdf>

## Concerns under Prevent

We recognise that Autism Bedfordshire's groups and activities are intended to be safe places in which service users and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and

skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments. Autism Bedfordshire acknowledges its duty to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.

In compliance with this duty Autism Bedfordshire where applicable will:

- carry out risk assessments in order to assess the risk of vulnerable adults being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology (including the risk of online radicalisation);
- promote fundamental British values;
- ensure all staff undertake the online general awareness training module on Channel: [www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html](http://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html) and are aware of when it is appropriate to make a referral to Bedfordshire Police prevent department who will work with the individuals.
- ensure that there are suitable filters in place for all IT equipment and that service users are equipped with the knowledge to stay safe online. Every member of staff will be aware of the risks posed by the online activity of extremist and terrorist groups.

## Coronavirus Addendum

### Response to COVID-19

- Safeguarding vulnerable Adults and those at risk continues to be a priority and remains an absolute necessity during this isolation period. We will continue to keep the adults in our care safe. We will ensure that Adults are safeguarded and protected during the Coronavirus outbreak.
- Across Bedfordshire, all blue light services (police, fire, and ambulance), NHS organisations, councils (Bedford, Luton and Central Bedfordshire) and other key stakeholders such as the voluntary sector, work together in coordinating responses to emergencies.

### Useful Links:

Central Bedfordshire

[https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/26/public\\_health/737/coronavirus\\_-\\_covid-19/5](https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/26/public_health/737/coronavirus_-_covid-19/5)

Luton

[https://www.luton.gov.uk/Health\\_and\\_social\\_care/coronavirus/Pages/new-default.aspx](https://www.luton.gov.uk/Health_and_social_care/coronavirus/Pages/new-default.aspx)

Bedford

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/public-health/coronavirus/coronavirus-care-for-the-over-70s-and-vulnerable-groups/>

Milton Keynes

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections/covid-19-in-milton-keynes](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections/covid-19-in-milton-keynes)

#### Government Advice

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-adult-social-care-action-plan>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-ethical-framework-for-adult-social-care/responding-to-covid-19-the-ethical-framework-for-adult-social-care>