



SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY

Approval Authority	Board of Trustees	Date approved	June 2023
Policy Contact	CEO	Date of review	June 2024
File Ref	Safeguarding Adults Policy		

Introduction

Age Exchange is committed to safeguarding and maximising the wellbeing of people at risk. We expect all our Trustees, colleagues, and volunteers to share this commitment. We recognise our responsibility for safeguarding people at risk, whilst providing quality service and support across our whole organisation.

Who is an “adult at risk”?

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over with care and support needs, whether permanent or temporary, who due to their specific needs, may be in vulnerable circumstances. They may be unable to take care of themselves or be unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect from others.

An adult at risk may be:

- a person with support needs, such as a physical disability, a learning disability or a sensory impairment
- a person with mental health needs, including dementia
- a person with a long-term health condition
- a person who misuses substances or alcohol to the extent that it affects their ability to manage day-to-day living
- a person who is unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision and is in need of care and support

This is not an exhaustive list. The Care Act (2014) legislation also includes, for example, people who are victims of sexual exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, domestic abuse and modern slavery. Forms of abuse and neglect may be intentional or unintentional.

Carers of people with care and support needs may also be involved in situations that require a safeguarding response. They can be the person who raises the concern, they can be abusers themselves, or they themselves may be vulnerable to harm and abuse. For example, experiencing intentional or unintentional harm from the adult they are supporting or from professionals they are in contact with. This may prompt a safeguarding alert.

What is “adult safeguarding”?

Adult safeguarding means protecting a person’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Under The Care Act (2014) legislation, local services work together to spot those at risk and take steps to protect them. All organisations have a duty of care to seek to recognise abuse and to ensure the welfare of all adults. Knowing when to implement safeguarding adult procedures is part of this process.

The Care Act (2014) outlines both proactive and reactive aims in organisational safeguarding practice. These are as follows:

1. To prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.
2. To stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.
3. To safeguard adults in a way that supports them to make choices and have control about the way they want to live.
4. To promote an approach that concentrates on improving the quality of life for the adult concerned.
5. To raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.
6. To provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and well and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or wellbeing of themselves or another adult.
7. To address what has caused the abuse or neglect.

Principles of Working with Adults at Risk

Age Exchange is committed to involving and supporting the people we work with through the following principles:

1. Treating those at risk with compassion, respect, and dignity
2. Working through a person-centred approach
3. Acknowledging and respecting differences in terms of protected characteristics as outlined in the Equalities Act (2010)
4. Listening to their views and opinions
5. Involving them with younger people in ways that promote intergenerational understanding and mutual respect
6. Planning projects in ways that minimise risks to their health, safety and wellbeing. Taking into account our responsibilities under The Care Act (2014)
7. Ensuring that partners are also taking into account their responsibilities
8. Ensuring all those who work or volunteer for us are background-checked via DBS
9. Training our volunteers and staff in safeguarding and ensuring that adults at risk are treated appropriately. This is a part of Age Exchange's standard staff and volunteer induction
10. Securely recording, where appropriate, the details of the risk and where we feel Safeguarding issues may be present.

The Chief Executive Officer is our overall safeguarding lead.

Principles of Safeguarding

Statutory guidance under The Care Act of 2014 enshrines the six principles of safeguarding to which Age Exchange fully subscribes:

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. *Partnerships* - local solutions through services working with their communities

6. *Accountability* - accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

As staff member or volunteer of our charity, no matter what your role, your care and vigilance will help us make a real difference to safeguarding the lives of those we support.

Age Exchange takes Safeguarding those we support very seriously, and this Policy and any associated Procedures will be kept under regular review, consistent with any national or local Safeguarding Policy changes.

Safeguarding Adults Procedure

If privy to a safeguarding concern, Age Exchange staff members, volunteers, students and trustees are expected to follow our local procedure. Further details are outlined in the Age Exchange Safeguarding Adults Procedure document.

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS PROCEDURE

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Procedures for dealing with safeguarding issues

Age Exchange promotes an organisational culture that encourages candour, openness and honesty at all levels. Any member of staff, volunteer, student or trustee at Age Exchange must report any safeguarding concerns to a member of Age Exchange management as soon as possible.

If there is immediate danger or an offence may have been committed then the staff, volunteer, student, or trustee involved must call for 999 emergency services.

In response to a safeguarding issue, Age Exchange management will take the following action:

- Consider if there are immediate or future risks to any person/s and take appropriate steps to ensure the maximum safety possible in the circumstances
- Request the completion of a safeguarding alert form, if appropriate (appendix 2)
- Speak to or interview the parties involved
- Keep concise, relevant and factual records with dates, times, actions and parties present
- Maintain ongoing communication with all parties; updating as appropriate
- Raise any concerns with the relevant Local Authority Adult Social Care services either in accordance with the borough in which the person/s live, or if this is unknown, through the London borough of Greenwich where Age Exchange's premises are situated (appendix 1)
- Follow Age Exchange & Local Authority procedures

- Share information with other agencies or partner organisations where applicable
- Ensure all levels of Age Exchange management are kept informed, unless those managers are implicated
- Adhere to Age Exchange policy procedures for working with adults at risk

Furthermore, the Age Exchange managerial approach to all safeguarding matters will consist of the following good practices:

- Remaining calm
- Being non-judgemental
- Staying objective
- Using open-ended questions
- Listening carefully
- Maintaining confidentiality
- Providing empathetic reassurance to issues, without pre-empting any outcomes
- Preserving evidence

Procedures for dealing with an allegation of suspected abuse

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff, volunteer or trustee is dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the person and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. Robust documenting methods, in line with data protection policy, will be utilised.

Any suspicion of inappropriate behaviour should be reported to the person's line manager, Chief Executive, or the Chair of Trustees. This will be documented where appropriate. Where Age Exchange is working in partnership with a care home or other health provider, the relevant senior manager should be informed immediately.

Any allegations would fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or neglected, or may have harmed or neglected an adult at risk
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, an adult at risk

- Behaved towards an adult at risk in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with people at risk – this should be reported to the relevant agencies (for example, Adult Social Care, or the police).

Management of an allegation may involve:

- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence
- Enquiries and assessment by Adult Social Care about whether a person is in need of protection or in need of services
- Offering follow-up and/or arranging aftercare as appropriate
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual
- A temporary ban or restriction from engaging in our services whilst the issue is investigated

Principles in investigating a complaint

When investigating a complaint, Age Exchange will give due consideration to;

Supporting those involved

Age Exchange will consider support for the adult at risk and/or carers involved, and support for the person who is the subject of the allegation.

If they are not implicated, carers of an adult at risk will be told about the allegation as soon as possible (if they do not already know about it). They will be kept informed about the progress of inquiries and told of the results where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process.

Where appropriate, Age Exchange will keep the person who is the subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the case, and arrange to provide appropriate support while the case is on-going. If the person is suspended, we will make arrangements to keep the individual informed about developments in the workplace.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated and considered.

Resignations and ‘compromise agreements’

The fact that a person tenders his/her resignation, or ceases to provide their services, must not prevent an allegation being followed up. Every effort will be made by Age Exchange to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations, bearing on the safety or welfare of persons at risk, including those where the person concerned refuses to co-operate with the process.

‘Compromise agreements’ – whereby a person agrees to resign, the employer agrees not to pursue disciplinary action, and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference – must not be used in these cases.

Record keeping

It is important that employers keep a clear and comprehensive summary of:

- Any allegations made
- Details of how allegations were followed up and resolved
- Any action taken
- Decisions reached

These details should be kept in a person’s confidential personnel file and a copy should be given to the individual. Such information should be retained on file, including people who leave the organisation, at least until the person reaches standard retirement age, or for 10 years if that is longer.

Appendix 1

Adult Safeguarding Contacts List

BOROUGH	DEPARTMENT	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
Bexley	Bexley Safeguarding Adults Board	020 8303 7777	bsab@bexley.gov.uk
Bromley	Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board	020 8461 7777 (out of hours 0300 303 8671)	
Greenwich	Greenwich Safeguarding Adults Board	020 8921 2304 (out of hours 020 8854 8888)	aops.contact.officers@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
Lewisham	Adult Social Care Advice & Information Team	0208 314 7777	
Southwark	Safeguarding Adults Team	020 7525 1754	safeguardingadultscoordinator@southwark.gov.uk
Lambeth	Safeguarding Adults Team	020 7926 5555 (out of hours 020 7926 5555)	
Barnet	Safeguarding Adults Team	020 8359 5000 (out of hours 020 8359 2000)	socialcaredirect@barnet.gov.uk
Haringey	First Response Team Adult Services	020 8489 1400	firstresponseteam@haringey.gov.uk

Useful Advice

ADVISORY BODY	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
Action on Elder Abuse	Helpline 0800 0699 784	opg.safeguardingunit@publicguardian.gsi.gov.uk

Appendix 2



SAFEGUARDING CONCERN ALERT FORM

Details of person filling in this form

Name:

Role:

Today's date:

What has concerned you?

(Please include as much detail as possible e.g. dates, times, who was present etc.)

Who have you reported this to?

TO BE COMPLETED BY MANAGER

Details of person potentially at risk:

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Borough they live in:

Carer involved? If yes, record details

Actions taken *(other agencies involved, CCTV image, account written etc. including dates and times)*:

Name of manager:

Signature of manager:

Date signed: