



Safeguarding Adults Policy

Scope

This policy applies to all staff working under a contract of employment with Next Chapter (NC), all volunteers, our Trustee Board and any individuals involved in supplying services to Next Chapter. It also sets out the roles and responsibilities of Next Chapter in working together with other professionals and agencies in promoting adults' welfare and safeguarding them from abuse and neglect.

Whilst this policy is intended to support staff working for NC, it does not replace but is supplementary to the Southend, Essex, Thurrock (SET) Safeguarding Adults Guidelines (Version 9, September 2023).

[SET safeguarding adult guidelines Final 2023 v9.pdf \(essexsab.org.uk\)](#)

Policy

Next Chapter is committed to:

- Ensuring that the safety and welfare of adults is always paramount.
- Maximising people's choice, control and inclusion and protecting their human rights.
- Working in partnership with others to safeguard adults.
- Ensuring safe and effective working practices are in place.
- Supporting staff within the organisation.

Definitions

Safeguarding adult concern

An adult, over 18 with needs for care and support, and experiences of abuse or neglect, and unable to protect themselves from risk of or experience of abuse or neglect.

Types of Abuse

- Physical
- Domestic Abuse, including honour-based abuse. Female genital mutilation and forced marriage
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Financial
- Modern Slavery
- Discriminatory, organisational neglect or acts of omission
- Self-neglect

The legal framework for this policy is:

- Southend, Essex and Thurrock SET Safeguarding Adults Guidelines (September 2022)
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Mental Health Act 2007 Updated 2011
- Health and Care Act 2022
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

Responsibilities of Next Chapter

- Next Chapter accepts the principles laid down within the SET Guidelines (Sept, 2023) which are: Empowerment, Prevention, Proportionate, Protection, Partnership and Accountable.
- To take action to identify and prevent abuse from happening.
- Respond appropriately when abuse has or is suspected to have occurred.
- Ensure that the agreed safeguarding adults procedures are followed at all times, these are available at <https://www.essexsab.org.uk/professionals/guidance-policies-protocols/>
- Provide support, advice and resources to staff in responding to safeguarding adult issues.
- Inform staff of any local or national issues relating to safeguarding adults.
- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities to attend training and to support staff in accessing these events.
- Ensure that the organisation has a dedicated staff member with an expertise in safeguarding adults.
- Ensure staff have access to appropriate consultation and supervision regarding safeguarding adults.
- Understand how diversity, beliefs and values of people who use services may influence the identification, prevention and response to safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure that information is available for people that use services, family members setting out what to do if they have a concern (e.g. ASK SAL helpline [Ask Sal – Essex Directory \(essexmap.co.uk\)](https://www.essexmap.co.uk)).
- Ensure that all employees who come in contact with vulnerable adults undergo a Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check.

Responsibilities of all staff

- Follow the safeguarding policies and procedures at all times, particularly if concerns arise about the safety or welfare of adults and their children. (See also Next Chapter Safeguarding Children Policy).
- Participate in safeguarding adults training and maintain current working knowledge.
- Become familiar with the current SET Safeguarding Adults Guidelines.
- Discuss any concerns about the safety or welfare of an adult with their line manager.
- Contribute to actions required including information sharing and attending meetings.
- Work collaboratively with other agencies to safeguard and protect the welfare of people who use services.
- Remain alert at all times to the possibility of abuse.
- Recognise the impact that diversity, beliefs and values of people who use services can have.

Training

All staff and volunteers receive Safeguarding Adults level 1 training in their initial starter training. Line managers will identify staff who require further levels of training for their role. Training is refreshed every two years externally and refreshed every year internally.

Reporting Abuse

It is expected that all staff will follow the current SET Safeguarding Adults Guidelines for full set of procedures see at <https://www.essexsab.org.uk/professionals/guidance-policies-protocols/>.

1. Staff are expected to report any safeguarding concern to the appropriate named designated person unless they suspect that person to be involved in the abuse, in which case the Whistle Blowing & Protected Disclosures Policy should be followed.
2. If at any time staff feel the person needs urgent medical assistance, they have a duty to call for an ambulance or arrange for a doctor to see the person at the earliest opportunity.

3. If at the time staff have reason to believe the person is in immediate and serious risk of harm or that a crime has been committed the police must be called and appropriate actions taken to minimise risk and preserve evidence.
4. Staff should not interview any alleged perpetrator.
5. Staff should seek the consent of the person and their views about what they would like the outcomes to be before taking any actions. The exceptions to this would be where the person lacks capacity under the Mental Health Act (2015) or to prevent serious harm or crime or disorder.

A Safeguarding Adult Concern Form SET SAF form must be completed and submitted where there are allegations of abuse as soon as possible and always within 2 working days. Guidance notes are available on [Essex Safeguarding Adults Board - Guidance, Policies & Protocols \(essexsab.org.uk\)](https://www.essexsafeguardingadultsboard.org.uk/guidance-policies-protocols).

The Care Act places a responsibility on local authorities to ensure enquiries into abuse and neglect are undertaken (Section 42).

All service users need to be safe. Throughout the process the service-users' needs remain paramount. This process is about protecting the adult and prevention of abuse.

Alleged abuser and victims who are both service users

It is important that consideration be given to a co-ordinated approach and partnership working, where it is identified that both the alleged abuser and alleged victim are service users. Also, consideration should be given to whether there is a safeguarding concern or it is a behavioural issue i.e. is there a power imbalance?

Allegations against members of staff, volunteers or Members of the Board of Trustees

If you receive an allegation against a member of staff you must:-

- Make a written record (including where possible – the abused person's own words). Include time, date and place of incident and what was said.
- Report to a named senior officer who will then follow the procedures set down within the SET Adults Guidance and Procedures.

It is essential that all information is kept strictly confidential between yourself and the named officer. Disclosure to other parties will be considered a disciplinary matter.

If a member of staff is dismissed or leaves following an allegation of abuse towards a service user Next Chapter recognises that there is a duty to report to the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service).

Employees should be aware that abuse is a serious matter that can lead to a criminal conviction. Where applicable the organisations Disciplinary & Grievance Policy should be implemented.

Confidentiality and information sharing

Next Chapter follows the HM Government Information Sharing Guidelines (7 Golden Rules).

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where

possible.

4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.
8. Further information and guidance can be found here [Information sharing: advice for practitioners \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Consent is not required in relation to sharing information (capacity issues must be considered) and to make a safeguarding referral where;

- A serious crime has been committed.
- Where the alleged perpetrator may go on to abuse other adults.
- Other adults are at risk in some way.
- The abused person is deemed to be in serious risk.
- There is a statutory requirement.
- The public interest overrides the interest of the individual.
- When a member of staff of a statutory service, a private or voluntary service or a volunteer is the person accused of abuse, malpractice or poor professional standards.

If there is any doubt about the legality of sharing information, staff must in the first instance consult their manager.

Designated safeguarding adult leads:

Organisational Safeguarding Leads:

Sally Harrington – Director of Adult Services – sallyh@thenextchapter.org.uk 07495408303

Justine Musk – Director of CYP Services – justinem@thenextchapter.org.uk 07495 408308

Outreach Safeguarding Leads:

Nicola Taylor – Community DAP Manager – nicolat@thenextchapter.org.uk 07495 408288

Ruth Cherry-Galal – IDVA Manager – ruthcg@thenextchapter.org.uk 07495 408276

Accommodation Safeguarding Leads:

Lorna Preece – Accommodation Manager – lornap@thenextchapter.org.uk 07495 408282

Mandy Saunders – Senior Refuge Practitioner – mandys@thenextchapter.org.uk 07495 408305

Charity trustees in the UK are required to take steps to protect everyone who comes into contact with their organisation from harm (Charity Commission for England and Wales, 2019; Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, 2019; Scottish Charity Regulator, 2018).

This includes:

- ensuring safeguarding policies, procedures and measures are fit for purpose and up-to-date

- making sure everyone in the organisation is aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and knows how to respond to concerns
- having a lead trustee for safeguarding and child protection
- challenging any decisions which adversely affect anyone's wellbeing
- managing allegations of abuse against someone involved in the organisation
- reporting serious incidents as necessary

Designated safeguarding Trustee Champion:

- Hannah Marshallsay - Trustee

The following policies should also be read alongside this document:

Policies	Forms
Bullying and Harassment Policy	
Code of Conduct	
Data Protection Policy	
Disciplinary & Grievance Policy	
Confidentiality Policy	
Information Sharing Policy	
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy	
Safeguarding Children Policy	Reporting a disclosure or concern
Whistleblowing & Protected Disclosures Policy	
Compliments & Complaints Policy	
Health & Safety Policy	

Document Information

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