

*Shaping services together for families of
birth to 25-year-olds with additional needs or disabilities in Swindon*

Policy Statement

Swindon SEND Families Voice believes that the safety and welfare of vulnerable adults is of the utmost importance and recognises its responsibility to safeguard vulnerable adults and promote their welfare, by a commitment to practice which protects them. It is the duty of all our Steering Group members, volunteers and parent representatives to protect each vulnerable adult from abuse and to be alert to the possibility of abuse. All Swindon SEND Families Voice Steering Group members, parent representatives and volunteers should familiarise themselves with the Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Adults in Swindon and Wiltshire which was updated in July 2017 and can be found via The Safeguarding Partnership Board website.

https://safeguardingpartnership.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/391/policy_and_procedures_for_safeguarding_adults_in_swindon

Swindon SEND Families Voice is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and expects all involved with the service to share this commitment.

Definitions

"An Adult who has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it".

People who abuse

- are often well known to their victims but can be strangers
- might be a relative, partner, son or daughter, friend or neighbour, a paid or voluntary worker, or a health or social care worker
- could be another vulnerable adult or service user
- may not realise they are abusing and can sometimes act out of character and abuse because of the stress of caring

Abuse can take place in a wide range of settings such as:

- vulnerable adult's own home
- carers home
- day centre
- care home
- hospital
- workplace
- educational institution.

Vulnerable adults may also be referred to as 'Adults at Risk'.

Recognition

The most common types of abuse are:

- **Physical abuse:** this is usually the use of force to cause pain and injury and signs might include burns, bruising, scratches, or accidents that cannot be explained. Also included is misuse of medication or forcing someone, for example, to stay in a care home against their wishes.
- **Financial abuse:** this is when a vulnerable adult is exploited for financial gain. Often valuables will go missing or there may be a change in financial circumstances that cannot be explained.
- **Sexual abuse:** this includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts which the vulnerable adult has not or could not consent to or was pressurised or manipulated into. Signs can include changes in behaviour or physical discomfort.
- **Psychological abuse:** this might be emotional abuse such as threats of harm or abandonment, enforced isolation, blaming or controlling behaviour, or verbal and racial insults. Signs may be fear, confusion or disturbed sleep.
- **Discriminatory abuse:** this includes any sort of abuse based on a vulnerable adult's race, gender or impairment such as their mental or physical health.
- **Domestic abuse:** Including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called "honour" based violence.
- **Modern slavery:** encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
- **Self-neglect:** this covers a wide range of behaviour, neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.
- **Neglect or Acts of Omission:** this includes things like repeated deprivation of help that an adult at risk needs which, if withdrawn, will cause him or her to suffer.
- **Organisational abuse:** This can include neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home. It can also relate to care provided and received in one's own home. It may manifest as a oneoff incident or as a series of incidents involving on-going ill treatment. It can be through neglect or, simply, from poor professional practice resulting from inadequate structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Action to be taken

- It is the responsibility of everyone to report abuse.
- If the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or in need of medical attention, call the emergency services on 999.
- If abuse is discovered or suspected or a disclosure made to you, the abuse must in all cases be reported at the earliest opportunity to one of the following agencies depending on the circumstances:

During office hours (Monday - Friday 8.30am - 5pm):

Swindon Borough Council Safeguarding Team - 01793 463555 or E-mail:

adultsafeguarding@swindon.gov.uk

Safeguarding Adults Investigation Team, Wiltshire Police 01380 826350

For alerts about a service registered with the Care Quality Commission you may also ring 03000 616161.

Out of hours:

Social Care Emergency Duty Service 01793 436699 (5pm – 9am) Police out of hours 101 (Request Control Room)

You may be directed by one of these agencies to complete a Multiagency Safeguarding Adults Online Referral Form –

https://www.swindon.gov.uk/forms/form/302/en/multiagency_safeguarding_adults_referral_form

Reporting procedures for cases of alleged/suspected abuse

- Record accurately and in detail what has been said to you using the person's own words, and what action has been taken on the carer's record.
- Inform the Safeguarding Lead
- If danger exists, ensure the person and any other vulnerable adults are protected.
- If the person is seriously injured seek immediate medical treatment. Immediately report the incident to the Safeguarding Lead and adhere to existing policies e.g. Health and Safety and to Swindon Borough Council's Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Adults.
- Be careful not to destroy or contaminate evidence.
- As soon as possible detailed notes should be made including when and to whom the abuse has been reported. Documentation is vital as evidence might be required for criminal proceedings at a later date.

Alleged Abuse by Committee members, Parent Representatives or Volunteers:

When an allegation is made against a member of our team or volunteers, then this allegation will be passed to the Chair of Swindon SEND Families Voice and/or the Safeguarding Lead. If the allegation concerns any of these members themselves, the allegation should be passed directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) using the contact details below.

- Adult Safeguarding Team on 01793 463555
- The designated officer contacted will record a note of the consultation and will advise on the appropriate action that needs to be taken.

Confidentiality

People have the right to expect that all Steering Group Members, Parent Representatives and volunteers will deal sensitively and sympathetically with their situation. It is important that information remains confidential and that only those with a 'need to know' should be privy to it.

Safer Recruitment Procedures

Those working directly and having regular, sustained contact with vulnerable adults or children are required to have an enhanced check through the Disclosure Service – the Government’s Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) before any commencement of work which involves substantial client contact.

Copies of all returned DBS checks and documentation pertaining to any vulnerable adult or child issues will be kept confidentially and securely locked within the organisation’s administration office according to Swindon SEND Families Voice procedures for the storage of sensitive/confidential information.

Training and induction can continue whilst waiting for the checks to clear but unsupervised face-to-face work cannot be undertaken until satisfactory checks have been received.

“Employers, social services and professional regulators are under a legal duty to notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS helpline 03000 200 190) of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to vulnerable groups can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

- An organisation which knowingly employs someone who is barred is breaking the law.
- A person barred from working with children or vulnerable adults is breaking the law if they work/volunteer or seek to work/volunteer with these groups.
- If the person you are referring is a teacher, you should also consider referring the case to the Teaching Agency, an executive agency of the Department for Education, who are now responsible for the regulation of teachers in respect of serious misconduct.”

Record Keeping

Any Steering Group member, parent representative or volunteer receiving a disclosure of abuse, or noticing possible abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. All records must be dated and signed.

All hand-written records will be retained, even if they are subsequently typed up in a more formal report.

Written records of concerns about vulnerable adults should be kept and stored securely even where there is no need to make a referral immediately.

All records relating to safeguarding concerns will be kept in a secure place and will remain confidential.

Training

Steering Group members, parent representatives and volunteers will take part in regular training opportunities. The Safeguarding Lead will undertake the Identifying Safeguarding Concerns and Making Referrals (Children) Course in line with the Safeguarding Policy. Steering Group members, parent representatives and volunteers will have regular 1:1 sessions to manage their involvement and discuss any potential training opportunities.

Further Information

A copy of Swindon Borough Council's Safeguarding Adults Staff Guide "flow chart for those raising a concern who to contact in Swindon" can be found on the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership website.

Information regarding safeguarding vulnerable adults, further training and resources can be found on the Local Safeguarding Partnership Board website

<https://www.swindon.gov.uk/safeguardingadults>

Review Statement

This policy has been prepared considering prevailing legislation and recognised good practice. New legislation requirements or changes in current legislation may necessitate the review of this policy document. The service will continue to review and amend all/part of this policy on a regular basis.

In case of any queries in relation to this policy please contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Kat Callaby. Email address: dsl.ssfv@outlook.com

Reviewed: January 2026

Date of next revision: January 2027

Responsibility of: Steering Group