



WEST BLETCHLEY COUNCIL

Safeguarding Adults Policy

1. Statement of intent

West Bletchley Council is committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of every person in our community, of whatever age, particularly the most vulnerable members, which includes adults with care and support needs. The Care Act 2014 defines adult safeguarding as protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Everyone has a responsibility to report abuse or concerns of abuse.

Safeguarding involves people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect. It balances the right to be safe with the right to make informed choices, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted, including taking into consideration their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

An adult at risk is someone over the age of 18 who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs),
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect,
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

Abuse can occur anywhere at any time and can be carried out by anyone. It can be a single act, repeated acts over a period of time or due to a failure to act, i.e. neglect. It can happen to one person, or several people at the same time. Abuse can take many forms including:

- physical abuse
- domestic violence
- sexual abuse
- psychological abuse
- financial or material abuse
- modern slavery
- discriminatory abuse
- organisational abuse
- neglect and acts of omission
- self-neglect
- hate crime.

An adult with care and support needs may be:

- an older person
- a person with a physical disability, a learning difficulty or a sensory impairment
- someone with mental health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder
- a person with a long-term health condition
- someone who misuses substances or alcohol to the extent that it affects their ability to manage day-to-day living.

People with care and support needs are not inherently vulnerable, but they may come to be at risk of abuse or neglect at any point due to:

- physical or mental ill-health
- becoming disabled
- getting older
- not having support networks
- inappropriate accommodation
- financial circumstances or
- being socially isolated.

In addition legislation includes in its definition of who should receive a safeguarding response, people who are victims of sexual exploitation, domestic abuse and modern slavery. However, since these are largely criminal matters, safeguarding duties would not be an alternative to police involvement.

The Care Act 2014 introduced the legal duty that the Local Authority must, if it believes an adult is subject to, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, make enquiries or ensure that others do so. The enquiry should establish whether any action needs to be taken to stop or prevent abuse or neglect, and, if so, by whom.

There are six key principles for Adult Safeguarding:

- Empowerment: decisions will be person led and with informed consent
- Prevention: it is better to take action before harm occurs
- Proportionality: a proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
- Protection: to support and represent those in greatest need
- Partnership: local solutions through services working with their communities who have a part in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse

It is our policy that:

- West Bletchley Council will comply with HM Government recommended practices, by taking all reasonable steps to ensure that anyone who presents a known risk to vulnerable groups is prevented from working with them.
- Those responsible for appointments will ensure that enhanced checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are undertaken for all eligible staff and, where appropriate, volunteers who work with adults with care and support needs under the auspices of West Bletchley Council.
- Enhanced DBS checks for eligible staff and volunteers will then be carried out at least every five years.

- All relevant staff and volunteers will undertake safeguarding adults training at a level appropriate to their role, to ensure they are aware of their role in the recognition of abuse or neglect and of the appropriate local procedures to follow.

West Bletchley Council staff will work in accordance with the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Adults Multi Agency Policy and Procedures that have been agreed locally through Milton Keynes Safeguarding Adults Board (MKSAB), which are based on the Care Act 2014 statutory guidance (www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/safeguarding-people-at-risk/safeguarding-adults-policies-and-procedures).

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The named Adult Safeguarding Representative for West Bletchley Council is:

- Helen Hupton, Clerk to the Council

The Deputies are:

- Michael McGann, Community Resource Centre Co-ordinator
- Trish Hunter, Head of Council Services

These persons will take on the responsibility for:

- Ensuring the policy is being put into practice.
- Being the first point of contact for adult safeguarding issues.
- Keeping a record of any concern expressed about adult safeguarding issues.
- Where necessary, taking further steps, such as referring concerns to other agencies including referral to the Milton Keynes Council Access Team and completion of an Adult Safeguarding Alert Form. The Access team can be contacted on 01908 253772 (email ascat@milton-keynes.gov.uk) or out of hours on 01908 705750. By completing this staff agree to the information contained in this form being shared with other agencies, in line with the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures, and to the possible investigation of the allegation that is being made.
- Ensuring that paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate training and support on safeguarding.
- Ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Council's Safeguarding representatives.

All workers have a duty to report any safeguarding concerns, and to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest that someone is at risk of harm. **If staff have a concern about an adult at risk of abuse and they are in immediate danger, the relevant emergency service should be contacted by ringing 999.**

In the first instance staff or volunteers will discuss their concerns with the Safeguarding Representative or one of the deputies to agree the appropriate action.

3. Safer Recruitment and Selection

It is our policy that all staff, including temporary personnel, who have close contact with adults with care and support needs will be subject to a careful and rigorous selection and vetting process with the elements listed below.

- Completion of an application form and checking the person's identity by their birth certificate or passport, something with a photograph if possible.

- Taking up references, preferably someone who has experience of their work or contact with children
- An interview by at least two people.
- Identifying reasons for gaps in employment or inconsistencies.
- Carrying out enhanced checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service for all eligible staff, via an appropriate local umbrella agency. The Disclosure and Barring Service is able to provide checks on the following:
 - Police criminal records via the Police National Computer
 - The DBS barred lists of individuals unsuitable for working with children or adults. Information on this can be obtained from the DBS at www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check
- Advice is sought about recruiting someone with a criminal record, and a risk assessment undertaken.
- A comprehensive induction process that includes our safeguarding policy and procedures.

4. Code of conduct for Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers must follow the Council's code of conduct for staff and volunteers working with the community.

5. Working with External Agencies

External agencies who work in partnership with West Bletchley Council to provide services for the local community will be required to provide evidence of their safeguarding policy or commit their staff to adopt this policy.

6. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Representative on an annual basis to ensure it is meeting its aims.

Adopted June 2017