



Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

(Children and Vulnerable Adults)

Approved	11 March 2025
Review Body	Full Council
Next Review	Annual (March 2026)
Signed	

Cllr Lesley Hill, Mayor

Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council Safeguarding Policy

(Designated Safeguarding Lead – Town Clerk)

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1. Introduction

Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people, and adults at risk who engage with our services. We recognise our responsibility to promote safe practices and protect individuals from harm, abuse, and exploitation.

2. Purpose

This policy outlines our commitment to safeguarding, detailing the procedures for identifying and responding to concerns of abuse, our safer recruitment practices, and the training provisions for staff and volunteers.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all councillors, staff, volunteers, and anyone working on behalf of Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council.

4. Definitions

- **Children and Young People:** Individuals under the age of 18 ¹

¹Children Act 1989 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

- **Adults at Risk:** Individuals aged 18 or over who are, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness; and who are, or may be, unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm, abuse or exploitation.²

5. Types and Signs of Abuse

5.1 Children – Common Types of Abuse

1. Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse is defined as deliberately hurting a child and causing physical harm.

Signs: Unexplained injuries, bruises, or burns; fear of parents being approached for an explanation; flinching when approached or touched; reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather; wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather.

2. Emotional Abuse:

Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child, which can have a severe and persistent negative effect on the child's emotional health and development. It is also known as psychological abuse.

Signs: Developmental delay; sudden speech disorders; neurotic behaviour; being unable to play; fear of making mistakes; self-harm; fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour.

3. Child Sexual Abuse:

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is when a child is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This may involve physical contact or non-contact activities and can happen online or offline.

Signs: Pain or itching in the genital area; bruising or bleeding near genital area; sexually transmitted infections; vaginal discharge or infection; stomach pains; discomfort when walking or sitting down; sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour; being sexually explicit.

4. Neglect:

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs.

The four main types of neglect are:

- **Physical Neglect:** not meeting a child's basic needs, such as food, clothing or shelter; not supervising a child adequately or providing for their safety
- **Educational Neglect:** not making sure a child receives an education
- **Emotional Neglect:** not meeting a child's needs for nurture and stimulation, for example by ignoring, humiliating, intimidating or isolating them
- **Medical Neglect:** not providing appropriate health care (including dental care), refusing care or ignoring medical recommendations.

Signs: Constant hunger; poor personal hygiene; constant tiredness; poor state of clothing; emaciation; frequent lateness or non-attendance at school; untreated medical problems;

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents>

destructive tendencies; low self-esteem; neurotic behaviour; no social relationships; running away; compulsive stealing or scavenging.

Other Types of Abuse include

- **Domestic Abuse**
- **Child Sexual Exploitation**
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour**
- **Bullying and Cyber bullying**
- **Online Abuse**
- **Female Genital Mutilation**
- **Child Trafficking and Modern Slavery**
- **County Lines**

The NPSCC is a recommended site for more information on Types and Signs of Abuse <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect>

5.2 Vulnerable Adult - Types of Abuse

The [Care and support statutory guidance](#) identifies ten types of abuse, these are:

1. Physical abuse

Physical abuse is defined as deliberately hurting a vulnerable adult and causing physical harm

Signs: Unexplained injuries; a history of unexplained falls or minor injuries; bruises or abrasions on soft parts of the body; signs of malnutrition; failure to seek medical attention; frequent changes of GP; reluctance to be alone with a particular person.

2. Domestic violence or abuse

Domestic violence and abuse includes any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

Signs: Low self-esteem; feeling that the abuse is their fault when it is not; physical evidence of violence such as bruising, cuts, broken bones; verbal abuse and humiliation in front of others; fear of outside intervention; damage to home or property; isolation – not seeing friends and family; limited access to money

3. Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is when a vulnerable adult is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This may involve physical contact or non-contact activities and can happen online or offline.

Signs: Bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks, and upper arms; torn or bloody underclothing; bleeding, pain, or itching in the genital area; sexually transmitted infections; pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse; unexplained difficulty in walking or sitting; reluctance to be alone with a particular person; unexplained behaviour change; explicit sexual behaviour or language

4. Psychological or emotional abuse

Psychological abuse is an insidious form of abuse in which perpetrators employ a wide range of personalised, psychological tactics to manipulate and frighten a person, distorting their thoughts and changing their sense of self to maintain control.

Signs: An air of silence when a particular person is present, withdrawal or change in the psychological state of the person, Insomnia, Low self-esteem, Uncooperative and aggressive behaviour, A change of appetite, weight loss/gain, Signs of distress: tearfulness, anger, Apparent false claims, by someone involved with the person, to attract unnecessary treatment.

5. Financial or material abuse

Financial or material abuse involves the control of money or resources, and is done to limit a person's freedom.

Signs:

- missing personal possessions
- unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle
- unexplained withdrawal of funds from accounts
- power of attorney or lasting power of attorney (LPA) being obtained after the person has ceased to have mental capacity
- failure to register an LPA after the person has ceased to have mental capacity to manage their finances, so that it appears that they are continuing to do so
- lack of cooperation or contact with the person allocated to manage financial affairs
- unusual interest in the family or carer in the assets of the person
- Signs of financial hardship in cases where the person's financial affairs are being managed by a court appointed deputy, attorney or LPA
- recent changes in deeds or title to property
- rent arrears and eviction notices
- lack of clear financial accounts held by a care home or service
- failure to provide receipts for shopping or other financial transactions carried out on behalf of the person
- disparity between the person's living conditions and their financial resources, e.g. insufficient food in the house
- unnecessary property repairs

6. Modern slavery

Modern Slavery is an umbrella term, encompassing human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced labour. This is a hidden crime and the true extent of modern slavery in the UK is unknown, but considered to be significant

Signs:

- Appearing to be malnourished, unkempt or withdrawn
- Isolation from the community, seeming under the control or influence of others
- Living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation, and/or living and working at the same address
- Lack of personal effects or identification documents such as a Passport
- Always wearing the same clothes
- Avoiding of eye contact, appearing frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers
- Fear of the police and people in authority
- Always being accompanied by another adult

- Unable to contact their friends or family
- Working very long hours and always being 'on call'
- Denied access to food, water, medicine, medical treatment or sleep

7. Discriminatory abuse

Discriminatory abuse is any form of abuse which is carried out because of a person's differences. It can include verbal abuse, harassment or deliberate exclusion, denying access to services or providing substandard services.

The abuse might be directed at a person because of their race, gender, age, disability, religion, sexuality, appearance or cultural background.

Signs:

- The person appears withdrawn and isolated
- Expressions of anger, frustration, fear or anxiety
- The care or support provided does not meet the adult's needs
- The adult is fearful or anxious around a particular person
- The adult is not allowed to access services that are available to others
- Name calling or physical abuse

8. Organisational or institutional abuse

The term "institutional abuse" refers to neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting.

Signs:

- An unsafe, unhygienic or overcrowded environment.
- A strict or inflexible routine.
- Lack of privacy, dignity, and respect for people as individuals.
- Withdrawing people from community or family contacts.
- No choice offered with food, drink, dress or activities.
- No respect or provisions for religion, belief, or cultural backgrounds.
- Treating adults like children, including arbitrary decision-making.

9. Neglect or acts of omission

Neglect or an act of omission is when someone who is responsible for caring for an adult with care and support needs fails to provide them with the care they need. This can be intentional or unintentional.

Signs:

- dirty or unhygienic environment
- poor personal hygiene or physical condition
- pressure sores or ulcers
- malnutrition or unexplained weight loss
- untreated injuries and medical problems
- inconsistent or reluctant contact with medical and social care

- failure to engage in social interaction
- inappropriate or inadequate clothing

10. Self-neglect

Self-neglect in vulnerable adults is when someone is unable or unwilling to care for themselves, putting their health or safety at risk.

Signs include:

Personal hygiene

- Poor personal hygiene, such as not bathing, brushing hair, or caring for nails
- Dirty or inappropriate clothing
- Unpleasant body odour

Living conditions

- Living in unsanitary, unsafe, or hazardous conditions
- Lack of heating, running water, or sanitation
- Poor maintenance of property
- Vermin, such as lice or rodents, in the home

Medical care

- Not taking prescribed medications properly or treating illnesses or injuries
- Refusing health assessments or interventions
- Missing scheduled appointments.

Social withdrawal

- Withdrawing from social activities and relationships and Feeling lonely and disconnected.

Other signs

- Hoarding possessions or animals
- Neglecting household maintenance
- Lack of essential food or shelter
- Malnutrition and/or dehydration
- Dangerous forgetful behaviour
- Decreased ability to reason
- Confusion
- Depression

6. Responsibilities of the Town Council

7.1 Governance & Leadership

- Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsible for handling safeguarding concerns.

- Ensure clear safeguarding policies and procedures are in place, regularly reviewed, and aligned with local and national safeguarding legislation.
- Promote a culture of vigilance where safeguarding is seen as a shared responsibility.

7.2 Prevention & Awareness

- Implement safer recruitment practices, including DBS checks for all councillors, staff and volunteers working with children and adults at risk
- Provide ongoing safeguarding training to staff and volunteers, ensuring they understand the types of abuse, signs of abuse, and reporting procedures.
- Promote a safe and inclusive environment for service users at the Council Offices, Leiston Film Theatre, Waterloo Centre, Live Well Hub, and Community Centre, ensuring support is available for individuals at risk.

7.3 Identifying & Responding to Abuse

- Ensure clear reporting pathways for safeguarding concerns, including how and where to report suspected abuse.
- Maintain confidential and secure records of safeguarding incidents.
- Work with external agencies (such as social services, police, and health professionals) to ensure appropriate responses to safeguarding concerns.

7.5. Training & Awareness

- Provide training and resources for councillors, council employees, volunteers, and service providers on safeguarding responsibilities.

7.6. Reporting & Accountability

- Establish clear procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns within the council and ensure all concerns are escalated appropriately.
- Ensure scrutiny and review processes are in place to audit safeguarding performance and respond to incidents effectively

8. Responsibilities of the Live Well Hub, Leiston Wellbeing Centre

As a provider of mental health and wellbeing services, the Live Well Hub has direct responsibilities in accordance with the Safeguarding responsibilities of the Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council as outlined above.

Noting specifically additional responsibilities to:

8.1 Ensuring that the service users of the Live Well Hub have safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

9. Collaboration Between the Live Well Hub & Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council

To ensure effective safeguarding, the Live Well Hub and Town Council must work together by:

- Sharing safeguarding policies and updates.

- Ensuring joint training initiatives for staff, volunteers, and councillors.
- Coordinating responses to safeguarding incidents and ensuring all concerns are addressed swiftly.
- Conducting regular safeguarding audits to evaluate policies and procedures.

10. How to Report Safeguarding Concerns

Both Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council and Live Well Hub should have a clear reporting process in place to ensure that safeguarding concerns are identified, documented, and escalated appropriately. Below is a structured approach to reporting concerns about children and adults at risk.

10.1. Recognising a Concern

Before reporting, ensure that a genuine safeguarding concern is present. Indicators include:

- A disclosure from a child, young person, or adult at risk.
- Observing signs of abuse or neglect (physical, emotional, financial, sexual, etc.).
- Witnessing dangerous or harmful situations.
- Noticing unexplained injuries, withdrawal, anxiety, or fear in a service user.

If a person discloses abuse to you:

- Listen carefully – don't interrupt, challenge, or question in a way that leads the person.
- Reassure them – confirm they have done the right thing by speaking up.
- Do not promise confidentiality – explain that you may have to share the information with relevant safeguarding professionals to keep them safe.
- Record the disclosure as soon as possible, using the person's exact words.
- Report the concern immediately following your organisation's procedures.

10.2. Internal Reporting Process (Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council and Live Well Hub)

Step 1: Report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- All concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible.
- If there is an immediate risk of harm, emergency services should be contacted first (999).
- The DSL will assess the concern and determine the next steps.

Step 2: Record the Concern

- Complete a Safeguarding Concern Form, noting:
 - Date, time, and location of the concern.
 - Names of those involved.
 - Details of what was observed or disclosed.
 - Any action taken so far.
- Keep records factual and objective.

Step 3: DSL Decision & Action

- The DSL will decide on the next course of action:

- No further action required – if the concern does not meet a safeguarding threshold.
- Support within the organisation – offering additional support internally.
- Referral to external **safeguarding agencies** – such as Social Services or the Police.

10.4. External Reporting (Escalation to Authorities)

If a safeguarding concern requires external intervention, the DSL will make a formal referral to the appropriate agency.

For Children (Under 18)

- Children’s Social Services – Contact the Local Authority’s Children’s Safeguarding Team.
- NSPCC Helpline (UK) – 0808 800 5000 (if unsure where to report).
- If immediate danger is present – call 999.

For Adults at Risk

- Adult Social Services – Contact the Local Authority’s Adult Safeguarding Team.
- Local Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) – If the concern involves professional misconduct.
- Action on Elder Abuse Helpline – 0808 808 8141.
- If a crime has been committed – report to the Police (101 or 999 in an emergency).

11. What Happens After a Report?

- Social Services or the Police will assess the concern and take appropriate action.
- A safeguarding enquiry may be initiated to investigate the situation further.
- Support may be provided to the victim, such as referrals to mental health services, safe accommodation, or legal protection.
- The DSL or organisation may need to cooperate with investigations and provide further information if required.

12. Confidentiality & Whistleblowing

- All reports should be kept confidential and only shared with those necessary to handle the case.
- Whistleblowing policies should be in place to protect staff and volunteers who report safeguarding concerns.
- If concerns are not being addressed internally, councillors, staff and volunteers can report externally to:
 - Local Authority Safeguarding Board
 - Ofsted (for concerns about children’s services)
 - Care Quality Commission (CQC) (for adult safeguarding issues in care settings)

Key Contacts:

In an emergency, call the Police on 999.
Emergency Services (999 for immediate danger)
Local Police Non-Emergency (101)

Children

Suffolk County Council's children's social services by calling Customer First on 0808 800 4005. You can also contact them by web chat.

Suffolk childrens safeguarding team, you can reach the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 606 1499.

NSPCC Helpline (0808 800 5000) – for advice on child safeguarding

Vulnerable Adults

Suffolk local adult safeguarding team, you can reach the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 606 1499.

You can also contact "Customer First" on 0808 800 4005 for safeguarding concerns

Appendix 1 Safeguarding Reporting Flowchart

Step 1: Recognising a Concern

- ◆ Has a child or adult at risk disclosed abuse?
- ◆ Have you witnessed signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation?
- ◆ Do you suspect harm or danger?
- ▣ If YES: Proceed to Step 2
- ▣ If NO but unsure: Speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for advice.

Step 2: Immediate Danger?


- 🚨 Is the child or adult at risk in immediate danger? 🚨
- YES → Call 999 (Emergency Services)
- NO → Proceed to Step 3


Step 3: Report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- 📌 Contact the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately.
- 📌 If the DSL is unavailable, report to a senior manager or directly to the Local Authority Safeguarding Team.
- ▣ For Children: Report to Children's Social Services
- ▣ For Adults at Risk: Report to Adult Social Services
- ⌚ Do this as soon as possible – on the same day!

Step 4: Record the Concern

- 📄 Complete a Safeguarding Concern Form, including:
 - ✓ Date, time, and location of the incident
 - ✓ Name(s) of those involved
 - ✓ Details of what was observed or disclosed
 - ✓ Any actions taken so far

 Keep it factual – do not add opinions

 Store the record securely and only share with those handling the case.

Step 5: DSL Decision & Action

 DSL assesses the concern and decides next steps:


 No further action needed (record and monitor)


 Internal support (e.g., providing extra wellbeing services)

 Referral to external safeguarding agencies

Step 6: Referral to External Safeguarding Authorities

 If necessary, DSL makes a formal referral to:

 Children’s Social Services (for child safeguarding concerns)

 Adult Social Services (for adult safeguarding concerns)


 Police (101 or 999 in an emergency)

 Local Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) for adults at risk

 NSPCC Helpline (0808 800 5000) – for child protection advice


 Once referred, the external agency takes over the case.

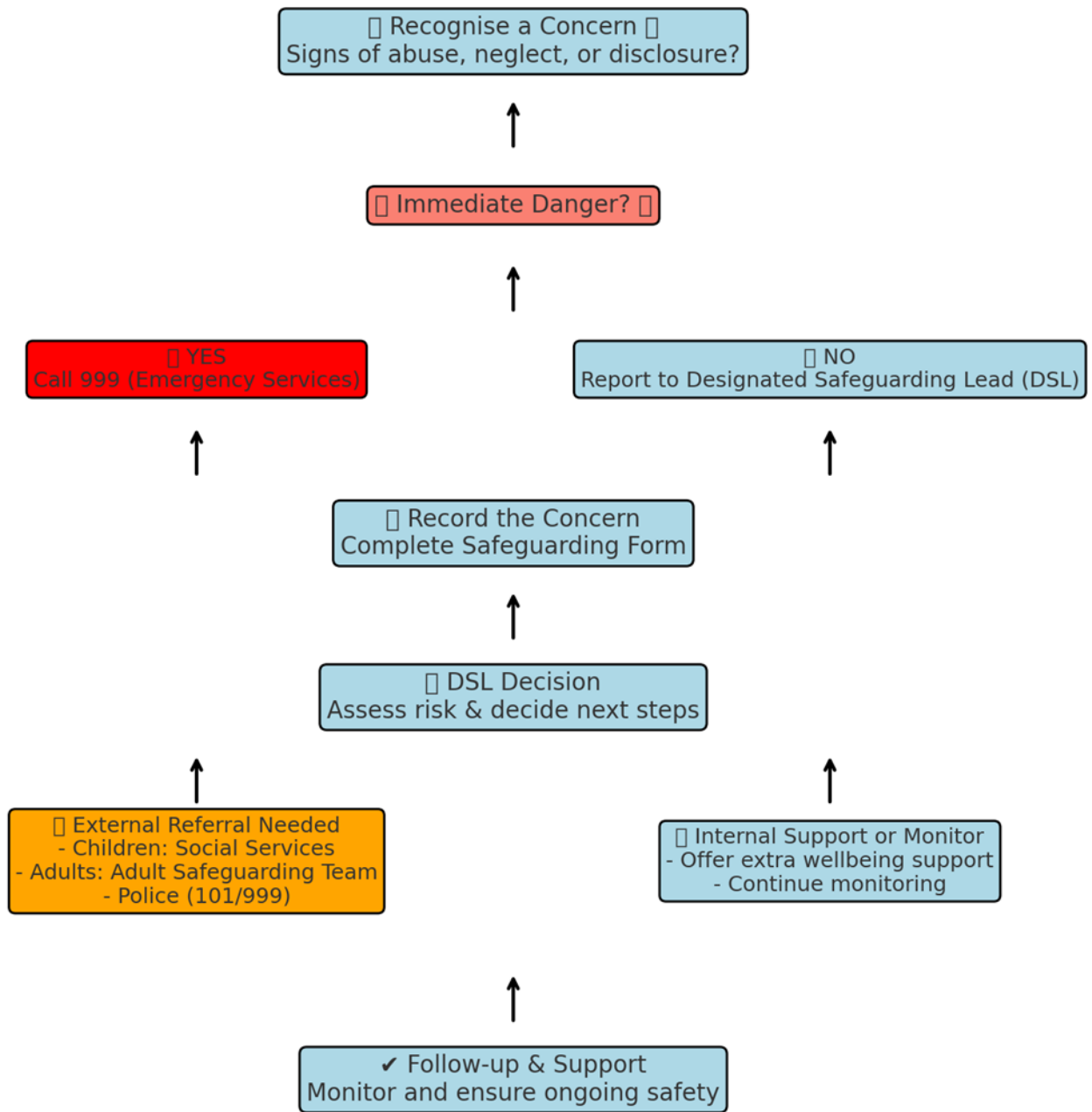
Step 7: Follow-Up & Support

 Ensure ongoing support is provided to the child/adult at risk.

 Maintain confidentiality but be available to cooperate with investigations.

 Monitor the situation and report further concerns if needed.

 If concerns are ignored or mishandled internally, use the Whistleblowing Policy to escalate externally.



Appendix 2

Safer Recruitment Requirements for the Live Well Hub & Town Council

Safer recruitment is essential to ensure that all staff and volunteers working with children and adults at risk are suitable, properly vetted, and understand their safeguarding responsibilities..

◆ 1. Recruitment & Pre-Employment Checks

Job Advert & Role Descriptions

- All job adverts and role descriptions should clearly state:
 - The organisation's commitment to safeguarding.
 - That roles involving contact with vulnerable individuals are subject to background checks.
 - The skills, experience, and values required for the role.

Application Process

- All applicants must:
 - Complete an application form (instead of submitting only a CV) to ensure full work history is provided.
 - Disclose any previous convictions or disciplinary actions related to safeguarding.
 - Provide at least two professional references, including one from their most recent employer.

◆ 2. Pre-Employment Checks

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Checks

- A DBS check is required for all staff and volunteers working with children and adults at risk.
- The level of DBS check depends on the role:
 - Enhanced DBS with Barred List Check – for staff in regulated activities (e.g., support workers, mentors, and those providing direct care).
 - Standard DBS Check – for staff with indirect contact with vulnerable individuals.

◆ DBS checks must be renewed every three years, or sooner if concerns arise.

Identity & Right to Work Checks

- Verify photo ID (passport, driving licence, etc.).
- Check proof of address (utility bill, bank statement, etc.).
- Ensure the applicant has the legal right to work in the UK.

Reference Checks

- ✓ Contact at least two references before confirming employment.
- ✓ One reference must be from a previous employer in a relevant role.
- ✓ Ask specific questions about suitability for working with vulnerable people.

Employment History Gaps

- ✓ Applicants must explain any gaps in employment.
- ✓ If unexplained gaps exist, these should be investigated before hiring.

◆ 3. Interview & Assessment

- ✓ Conduct a structured interview that includes safeguarding-related questions, such as:
 - Have you worked with vulnerable people before?
 - How would you handle a safeguarding concern?
 - Can you give an example of a time when you identified and acted on a safeguarding risk?
- ✓ If the role involves direct work with vulnerable individuals, practical assessments or scenario-based exercises should be used.
- ✓ Ensure at least two interviewers are present to reduce bias and assess safeguarding awareness.

◆ 4. Post-Employment Requirements

Induction & Training

- ✓ All new staff and volunteers must:
 - Complete safeguarding training within the first month of employment.
 - Read and sign the Safeguarding Policy.
 - Be assigned a mentor for their probation period.

Ongoing Training & Supervision

- ✓ Annual safeguarding training is mandatory for all staff and volunteers.
- ✓ Regular supervision meetings should include safeguarding discussions.
- ✓ Any concerns about a staff member's behaviour should be reported under whistleblowing policies.

◆ 5. Reporting & Monitoring

- ✓ Records of DBS checks, references, and training completion should be securely maintained.
- ✓ A Safer Recruitment Lead should oversee all hiring processes.
- ✓ Any concerns about an existing employee should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

📌 Summary: Key Safer Recruitment Steps

- ✓ Clear job adverts with safeguarding statements
- ✓ DBS & identity checks before appointment
- ✓ Thorough reference & employment history checks
- ✓ Structured safeguarding interview questions
- ✓ Mandatory safeguarding training for all staff
- ✓ Ongoing monitoring & supervision

Safer Recruitment Checklist

1. Job Advert & Application Process

- ✓ Job advert includes a safeguarding statement
- ✓ Role description specifies safeguarding responsibilities
- ✓ Application form used (not just CVs)
- ✓ Applicants disclose any past convictions/disciplinary actions
- ✓ Minimum of two professional references requested

2. Pre-Employment Checks

- ✓ DBS Check (Enhanced/Standard depending on role)
- ✓ Identity verification (Passport, driving licence, etc.)
- ✓ Right to work check (Visa, work permit if applicable)
- ✓ Proof of address (Utility bill, bank statement, etc.)
- ✓ Reference checks completed before employment
- ✓ Employment gaps explained & verified

3. Interview & Assessment

- ✓ Structured interview with safeguarding-related questions
- ✓ Scenario-based safeguarding questions asked
- ✓ Minimum of two interviewers present
- ✓ Practical assessments for direct care roles

4. Post-Employment Requirements

- ✓ Safeguarding induction within the first month
- ✓ Read & sign the Safeguarding Policy
- ✓ Annual safeguarding training mandatory
- ✓ Regular supervision & performance reviews
- ✓ Probationary period includes safeguarding evaluation

5. Ongoing Monitoring & Reporting

- ✓ Records of DBS checks & references securely maintained
- ✓ Safer Recruitment Lead oversees hiring process
- ✓ Whistleblowing procedures in place for concerns
- ✓ Ongoing professional development & refresher training

All employees & volunteers working with children or adults at risk must meet these requirements before and during their role.