

FAMILIES TOGETHER SUFFOLK

(FAMILIES TOGETHER)

Safeguarding Adults at Risk of Harm Policy and Procedures



Policy Statement

Families Together Suffolk follow the 'Safeguarding Adults' Policy and Procedures which are consistent with the principles and legal frameworks provided by the Human Rights Act, the Mental Capacity Act 2005, and the Care Act 2014.

There are procedures in place for an appropriate assessment to be carried out, when necessary, as to whether a person has the mental capacity to make decisions about achieving safety from abuse or neglect.

Families Together is committed to safeguarding and protecting the safeguarding of all who use its service. We recognise that we have a responsibility to protect the safeguarding of adults at risk through our support for families and to ensure they are protected from harm. Every person's right to live a life free from abuse and neglect. Families Together has no statutory remit or role to investigate but acknowledges a responsibility to pass on to the appropriate statutory agency concerns in relation to the safeguarding of an adult at risk so that these concerns can be assessed.

The Safeguarding Adults Framework has been developed by multi-agency partners of the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership which we use to identify types of abuse and what, if any, interventions are required (such as reporting a concern):

<https://www.suffolksp.org.uk/safeguarding-framework-and-threshold-matrix#gsc.tab=0>

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DEFINITION OF AN ADULT AT RISK

A person aged 18 years or over who is receiving or may need community care services and is or may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from significant harm or serious exploitation. This may include a person who:

- Are elderly or frail.
- Has a mental illness including dementia, shows signs of acute psychosis, suicide, self-harm, harm to others or homicide.
- Has a physical or sensory disability.
- Has a learning disability.
- Has a severe physical illness.
- Is a substance misuser.
- Is homeless.

In this context community care services includes all care services provided in any setting by any agency whether statutory, voluntary or community and therefore includes the services provided by Families Together.

PRINCIPLES

Families Together Suffolk will follow the 6 principles of Safeguarding Adults outlined in the Care Act 2014: Empowerment, Prevention, Protection, Proportionality, Partnership and Accountability

Families Together Suffolk will also follow Making Safeguarding Personal Approach stated in the Care Act 2014. We will aim to ensure that the person in relation to the safeguarding enquiry, are fully engaged and consulted throughout and that their wishes and views are central to the final outcomes as far as possible. If there is a concern about an adult's mental capacity Families Together will contact the relevant agency.

Adults at risk in Families Together, irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, or sexual orientation, have the right to:

- Have their money, goods and possessions treated with respect and to receive equal protection for themselves and their property.
- Guidance and help in seeking assistance because of abuse.
- Be supported in making their own decisions about how they wish to proceed in the event of abuse and to know their wishes will only be over-ruled if it is considered necessary for their own safety or the safety of others.
- Be supported in bringing a complaint under any existing complaint procedure.
- Be supported in reporting the circumstances of any abuse to independent bodies.
- Have alleged, suspected, or confirmed cases of abuse that come to light through Families Together support dealt with as a priority.
- Receive appropriate support following abuse.

It is the responsibility of all within Families Together to report any concerns about abuse. Please see flow chart of reporting concerns. When abuse of an adult is reported, Families Together Suffolk will make a referral to the **Suffolk Adult Care Portal** and in the case of an urgent referral contact the **Customer First** on **0808 800 4005**.

In the case of an adult at risk of harm who is in immediate danger, call the **Police on 999** or **Suffolk Police 01473 613500**.

If you have a safeguarding concern about an Adult at Risk of Harm and cannot contact any of the safeguarding personnel listed above and/or need further advice, please call:

MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) Professional Consultation Line on **0345 606 1499** (Monday – Thursday 0900-17.00, Fri 09.00-16.25).

All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

All personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Where there are concerns about the safeguarding of an adult at risk this policy and these procedures will be followed, and information will be shared with the relevant agencies to protect them following the guidelines of The Care Act 2014

Families Together will take all possible steps to ensure that adults with whom it works are kept safe through:

- Clear procedure for the raising of concerns about an adult at risk.
- Safe recruitment processes for all trustees, staff and volunteers including the obtaining of DBS checks as appropriate.
- Procedures to structure the management of an allegation of abuse against trustees, staff, or volunteers.
- Effective induction, training and support for trustees, staff, and volunteers to ensure they are aware of and understand the importance of implementing this policy and the related procedures.
- Identified personnel to hold the strategic lead and designated safeguarding responsibilities for the safeguarding of adults at risk within Families Together
- Clear expectations of all trustees, staff, and volunteers for sharing information.

PROCEDURE WHEN THERE ARE CONCERNS

(please also see Appendix 2)

- a) If anyone who is associated with Families Together has concerns about the safeguarding of an adult at risk of harm, they must raise those concerns and inform the designated person **without delay**.
- b) If an adult discloses that they are being or have been abused this information must be taken seriously and the information must be passed to the designated person for dealing with their concerns without delay and in any event **within 24 hours** of the information coming to light.
- c) The first priority should always be to protect the safety of all adults at risk, and it is the responsibility of all within Families Together to act on any suspicion or evidence of abuse or neglect.
- d) The information regarding the concerns and the action taken will be recorded and passed to the relevant agencies. Written information will be recorded on the Charity Log Data Base (CLOG) and if needed will be passed to the respective agencies.

- e) If an adult is at risk of immediate harm, then the designated person will inform the appropriate agency without delay.
- f) If the adult is not in immediate harm the information must be passed to the designated person who will respond as soon as possible but **within 24 hours**.
- g) Failure to report concerns may lead to suspension pending investigation and for staff, disciplinary action.
- h) If a member of staff, volunteer or trustee is alleged to have put the safety of an adult at risk, the designated person will inform the appropriate agency and cooperate fully with the authority in the way the matter is dealt with including the immediate suspension of the person pending an investigation.

Staff or volunteers supporting adults showing signs of Acute Psychosis/Suicide/Self-Harm /Harm to Others or Homicide

- Ensure the person is safe and stay with them.
- Contact a trusted person e.g., family member.
- Contact the Mental Health Crisis Team if you know the person is being supported by them Contact Adult Safeguarding Team
- Contact their GP or
- Phone 999 It is important to stay with the person until help arrives.
- Inform your line manager.

Allegations against Staff and Volunteers

It is important that any concerns for the safeguarding of an adult at risk arising from abuse or harassment by a member of staff or volunteer should be reported immediately to the designated person, or, if they are implicated in the concerns, to the safeguarding lead or a named trustee, and an incident form completed. Concerns about poor practice should also be reported to the designated person.

Where there are allegations of abuse or concerns about poor practice of staff or volunteers there may be three strands of investigation as follows:

1. Adult at risk protection investigation (externally led)
2. Criminal investigation (externally led by the Police Authority)
3. A disciplinary investigation (internally led)

It may be that the employee will be suspended with pay during an investigation or a volunteer asked to cease volunteering pending the outcome of the investigation.

Retention of Records

A factual, dated and signed/initialled record of concerns about an adult at risk in a family supported will be kept, in line with Families Together record keeping and procedures.

Records kept by employees about adults at risk should only include contacts made, referrals made including date, time, and reason, and referral agency.

PATIENT SAFETY INCIDENTS

Charity Commission

It is a requirement of the Charity Commission that all charities inform them of serious incidents that may occur. The Charity Commission defines a serious incident as “an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant:

- loss of your charity’s money or assets
- damage to your charity’s property
- harm to your charity’s work, beneficiaries or reputation

It is the responsibility of the trustees to report a serious incident. More details can be found on the Charity Commission website <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity#what-to-report>

Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF)

In case of a patient safety incidents and responses, FTS will follow the policy and procedures as prescribed by NHS England in the PSIRF.

The NHS describes a patient safety incident as something unexpected or unintended has happened, or failed to happen, that could have or did lead to patient harm.

The PSIRF has four key aims with regards to patient safety incidents: compassionate engagement and involvement of those affected; a system-based approach to learning; considered and proportionate responses; supportive oversight focused on strengthening response systems and improvement.

Should a significant patient safety incident arise FTS will inform the ICB for information sharing and investigation support purposes. FTS will also undertake Duty of Candour for notifiable patient safety incidents, of moderate or greater harm.

Disclosure of Information

- Families Together recognises the importance of sharing information to protect an adult at risk and normally any disclosure of confidential information to any other person may only be undertaken with the express permission of the person.
- Where it is considered necessary for the safeguarding of an adult at risk, the person will be kept informed unless to do so would put his or her at risk of harm.
- In recognition of its commitment to pass on concerns, Families Together will maintain effective working partnerships with organisations working with adults at risk of harm within the community and will maintain current information on and work within the requirements of the local procedures followed by statutory and voluntary agencies.

NAMED PERSONS IN KEY SAFEGUARDING ROLES AT FAMILIES TOGETHER SUFFOLK

All those who work for or with Families Together Suffolk share the responsibility for safeguarding and protecting children and vulnerable adults but there are individuals within Families Together with specific safeguarding responsibilities.

Safeguarding Lead Sarah Newell 07542 785649

Deputy Safeguarding Lead Stephen Wort 07925 138386 covers Monday

Deputy Safeguarding Lead Jo Pearson 07933 801871 covers Tuesday Wednesday Thursday

Deputy Safeguarding Lead Gina Clark 07563 029117 covers Friday

Named Trustee for Safeguarding Jade Hawes 07753 637403

REVIEW OF POLICY

The safeguarding policy must be reviewed, approved and endorsed by the board of trustees annually or when legislation changes.

Signed by Chair:	C. Read
Date:	January 2025
Review Date:	February 2026

Appendix 1 Types of Abuse include but are not limited to:

Self-neglect including Hoarding

Self-neglect is an extreme lack of self-care to the extent that it threatens a person's health and/or their safety. It will often involve the person neglecting their personal care, their health or their environment. Sometimes people who self-neglect are reluctant to access services to meet their needs and this leads to an impact on their health and well-being. It can also include behaviours such as hoarding which impacts on their health and/or their safety. Hoarding is the accumulation of a large number of items. It is different to a collection as it is associated with having a detrimental effect on emotional, physical, social or financial well-being. Items can often have no value and would be considered rubbish by others but someone who hoards will struggle to part with them.

Modern Slavery

This encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude.

Domestic Abuse

This includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse perpetrated by anyone within a person's family. It also includes so-called "honour" based violence.

Discrimination

Discrimination is abuse that centres on a difference or perceived difference, particularly with respect to race, gender, disability, or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act.

Organisational

This includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting, such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home.

Organisational abuse can range from one off incidents to ongoing ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice because of the structure, policies, processes, and practices within an organisation.

Physical

This includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, restraint, and misuse of medication. It can also include inappropriate sanctions.

Sexual

This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Financial or Material

This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, and coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance, or financial transactions. It can also include the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Neglect and Acts of Omission

This includes ignoring medical or physical care needs and failing to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services. It also includes the withdrawing of the necessities of life, including medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.

Emotional or Psychological

This includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying occurs when someone repeatedly makes fun of another person online, or repeatedly picks on another person through emails or text messages. It can also involve using online forums with the intention of harming, damaging, humiliating, or isolating another person. It includes various types of bullying, including racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying related to special education needs and disabilities. The main difference is that, instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying face-to-face, they use technology to do it.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Definition

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Reporting

FGM is illegal. If it is 'known' a case of FGM has taken place, then the Police must be notified immediately via the non-emergency number - 101.

It is a personal duty which requires the individual who has become aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred. Volunteers will be supported by their coordinator or the Safeguarding Lead.

The Safeguarding Lead must be informed.

If there is a belief, there is a risk of FGM social care services must be notified immediately.

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is illegal in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one where one or both people do not or cannot give consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to force them into marriage.

Reporting

If there is a belief there is a risk of a forced marriage, contact Suffolk County Council- Customer First by following the procedures shown on the flow chart in this policy or dial 999 in an emergency.

Mate Crime

"Mate Crime" is when "vulnerable people are befriending by members of the community who go on to exploit and take advantage of them" (Safety Network Project, ARC). It may not be an illegal act, but it still has a negative effect on the individual. A mate crime is carried out by someone the adult knows, and it often happens in private. In recent years there have been several Serious Care Reviews relating to people with a learning disability who were seriously harmed, or even murdered, by people who purported to be their friend.

Radicalisation

The aim of radicalisation is to inspire new recruits, embed extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals to the legitimacy of a cause. This may be direct through a relationship, or through social media.

Extremism

Although not specifically a category of abuse, extremism is something we are aware of at Families Together Suffolk. "Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities based on race, faith, or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society."

Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as "the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist".

If there is concern FTS Safeguarding lead will contact Act Early website or call Act Early support line for advice 0800 011 3764, in an emergency dial 999.

Criminal Exploitation, Gangs and County Lines Exploitation

Criminal exploitation is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control or manipulate a vulnerable adult to commit a crime. The victim may have been exploited even if the activity seems consensual. Criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.

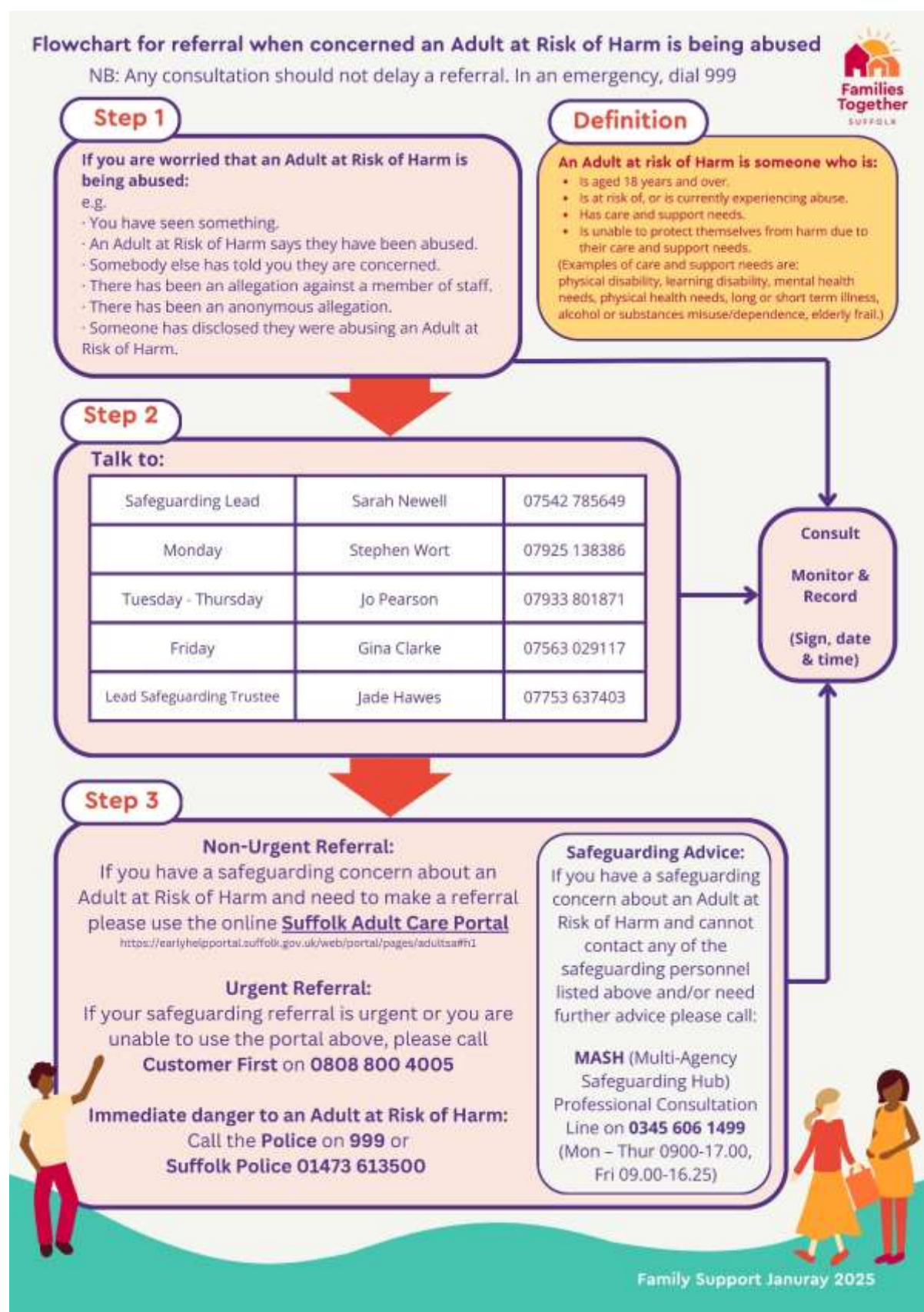
For further guidance see the government website for Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable adults or in an emergency dial 999

PREVENT: Vulnerable to radicalisation (VTR) or influenced by Extremism

We will act in accordance with the policies and procedures on the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership website for PREVENT

Staff may notice a change in an adult's behaviour that may suggest they are vulnerable to violent extremism. After having discussed concerns with the Safeguarding Lead, being mindful of confidentiality, where the staff member still has concerns that the individual may be vulnerable to violent extremism, [a Vulnerable To Radicalisation \(VTR\) referral form](#) is to be completed and sent to the preventreferrals@suffolk.pnn.police.uk. For urgent safeguarding concerns call Customer First 0808 800 4005 **STAFF MUST NOT DISCUSS EXTREMISM CONCERNS WITH THE INDIVIDUAL PRIOR TO REFERRAL**

Appendix 2 Flowchart of what to do when you have a concern about an adult



Appendix 3 Roles and Responsibilities within Families Together Suffolk

The Trustees retain ultimate responsibility for promoting the safeguarding of adults supported by Families Together. They should agree:

- the member of staff with responsibility for undertaking the **Safeguarding Lead**. This is normally a senior staff member.

The role of the Families Together Suffolk Lead is to:

- Model and promote Families Together Suffolk's commitment to safeguarding children/adults in all aspects of their work and conduct.
- Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and Code of Conduct are available and understood by all trustees, staff, and volunteers, and that these are integrated into practice.
- Ensure the Families Together Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding is updated and reviewed annually in line with local guidance.
- Ensure appropriate training provision and dissemination of information for trustees, staff, and volunteers on safeguarding issues.
- Take lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding issues and providing information, advice and support to trustees, staff, and volunteers.
- Support the staff, trustees, and volunteers with their responsibilities in keeping adults safe, by:
 - ensuring the provision of regular, recorded supervision.
 - maintaining an overview of records of concern and action (ROCA) and referrals to appropriate agencies and collate safeguarding concerns raised by Families Together to identify patterns.
 - ensuring that the Safeguarding Adviser or nominated trustee contribute to this overview.
 - ensuring records are kept appropriately, in line with policy and practice.
- Maintain up to date knowledge of national and local safeguarding procedures and liaise appropriately with local agencies regarding any issues.
- Notify and liaise with the Families Together trustees and the Local Authority around any allegations of harm or inappropriate behaviour made against staff, volunteers, and trustees.

The Role of the Safeguarding Deputies

In the absence of the Safeguarding Lead, the Deputies will assume the role and the responsibilities of the Safeguarding Lead (see above).

All Staff, Trustees and Volunteers role is to

- Model and promote Families Together Suffolk's commitment to safeguarding adults in all aspects of their work and conduct.
- Take responsibility for dealing with concerns about the safety of adults following the Families Together Suffolk's policies and procedures.
- Staff maintain a clear, factual, dated and signed/initialled record of contact with each supported family, in accordance with Families Together guidance on record keeping.

- Inform the Families Together Safeguarding Lead/ Deputies of concerns raised, and processes followed; ensuring records of concern and action (ROCA) are discussed, signed off and actioned appropriately.
- Liaise with relevant agencies where appropriate about concerns, in accordance with Families Together confidentiality policy.
- Ensure the Safeguarding Policy is available to families, including parents/carers and children and young people in Families Together.
- Liaise with the Families Together Safeguarding Lead/Deputies about any concerns, including where there are allegations against trustees, staff, and volunteers, in accordance with Families Together policies and procedures.

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Trustee with Responsibility for Safeguarding

Families Together Suffolk nominates a trustee who has a working knowledge of Safeguarding or who undertakes local training to fulfil that role. The role of the trustee is to:

- provide a sounding board for staff with a Safeguarding Lead/Deputies role to consider the most appropriate course of action to take where there is a safeguarding concern in a family.
- support the strategic lead to use local procedures appropriately (e.g. for referral, for escalation or dispute resolution)
- contribute to Board discussions about scheme capacity in working with more complex families, including those where there are safeguarding concerns.
- support the Board and Safeguarding Lead/Deputies to monitor and review systems, policy, and procedures to ensure good safeguarding practice within the Families Together and compliance with the Families Together Quality Assurance Standards
- undertake spot checks of family and volunteer file.

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External Local Specialist Safeguarding Adviser to the trustees and staff:

Rosie Carter SAFE (CIC) 01379 871091

Appendix 4 Disclosures

A disclosure is the act of making new or secret information known.

Recording information

Refer to flowchart for referral when concerned a child/adult is being abused

A report of the disclosure will be passed to social care services or the Police as soon as possible

All records will be written by the person with the concern within 24 hours, on headed paper or incident sheets and will be factual, non-judgmental. It is helpful to record any known details of the children, young people or vulnerable adult(s) involved e.g. name, address, date of birth etc. It is equally important to record the reasons for making the decision not to refer to social care services as when the decision is taken to refer. Always sign, date and time these records

All records will be securely kept in a Confidential File on our password protected internal system. Only limited persons will have access.

Records will be kept up to 25 years (children)

Records will be kept for 10 years (adult). NB. If the disclosure is made about a member of staff, records will be kept for 10 years or until retirement, whichever is the longer.

After which records will be securely destroyed (shredded)

Note the 'must destroy by date' on the front of each folder/ in the name of the file/ folder.

Other internal information

Data Protection Policy

Policy for Safeguarding Children

Flow Charts for referral when concerned a child/adult is being abused

Appendix 5 Training

All staff, trustees, Home-Visiting and Group volunteers complete a certificated safeguarding module during their initial training. Retail volunteers are encouraged to complete an online safeguarding course.

Training is refreshed every 3 years either by joining our prep course or online and an annual update is completed.

All staff are required to complete Prevent Awareness training.

All staff are required to complete Safeguarding Adults Basic Awareness training, which includes MCA.

The Safeguarding Lead is required to complete Adults Safeguarding Leads training and is also required to complete a more detailed MCA training.

Any further updating needed in safeguarding policies or procedures are cascaded as necessary either at Board, team or supervision meetings.

Appendix 6 Retail Safeguarding Policy and Procedures - Charity Shop & eBay Hub

In addition to the safeguarding training at induction and ongoing updates (see Appendix 5) retail staff and lead volunteers will complete the Charity Retail Association online training for safeguarding. The organisation is accrediting its retail safeguarding procedures through the Charity Retail Safeguarding Scheme (CRSS) to ensure industry standards are met.

