



Autus, The Hao2.eu Foundation Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Introduction

Autus engages with people from every section of the community particularly young people with disabilities and / or complex needs. As an organisation Autus is committed to ensuring that health, safety and well being of every staff, volunteers and users is paramount and underpins all of the work we do.

To ensure that the people with whom we work (and their parents/carers/guardians) are confident that the people in charge of delivering Autus activities are trustworthy and responsible and will do everything they can to keep the vulnerable adult or child safe from harm, we have a comprehensive policy, procedures and training to eliminate the risk of harm to young people/vulnerable adults.

Autus has also put in place safeguards to avoid putting their workers in positions where abuse might be alleged, and to ensure that all workers know exactly what to do should abuse be suspected.

The Safeguarding Officer is Gina Pickersgill and the Health and Safety Officer at Autus, Donna Thompson together they are responsible for the implementation of the safeguarding policy / procedure.

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2. Autus Values and Principles

- Responsibility for safeguarding young people/vulnerable adults must be shared as they can only be protected effectively when all the relevant agencies and individuals accept responsibility and co-operate with one another. The Children Act 2004 places new duties on public bodies to share information in order to safeguard the welfare of children and young people.
- No single person is responsible for safeguarding at Autus it is a shared responsibility of all staff.
- Safeguarding young people/vulnerable adults underpins all the work we do regardless of whether people are using physical premises or virtual environments.

- Young people / vulnerable adults have the right to be protected from abuse of all types, and to expect that adults in positions of responsibility will do everything possible to ensure their health, safety and well being.
- Safeguarding matters will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively
- Autus has a duty to follow up any safeguarding concerns and report suspected cases of abuse to the appropriate body, when disclosed or observed

3. DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS

Child is anyone under the age of 18 even if they live independently.

Vulnerable Adult is defined in the ‘No Secrets’ government report as a person “who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.”

Abuse:

Physical Abuse of Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child or vulnerable adult.

Physical Abuse - Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unexplained injuries – bruises / abrasions / lacerations ▪ The account of the accident may be vague or may vary from one telling to another. ▪ Unexplained burns ▪ Regular occurrence of unexplained injuries <p>Most accidental injuries occur on parts of the body where the skin passes over a bony protrusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Withdrawn or aggressive behavioural extremes ▪ Uncomfortable with physical contact ▪ Seems afraid to go home ▪ Complains of soreness or moves uncomfortably ▪ Wears clothing inappropriate for the weather, in order to cover body. ▪ The interaction between the child, vulnerable adult and its carer

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s or vulnerable adult’s basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s or vulnerable adults health or development.

Neglect may involve a parent/carer failing to:

- a) Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- b) Protect a child or vulnerable adult from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- c) Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);

- d) Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's or vulnerable adult's basic emotional needs.

Neglect - Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unattended medical need ▪ Underweight or obesity ▪ Recurrent infection ▪ Unkempt dirty appearance ▪ Smelly ▪ Inadequate / unwashed clothes ▪ Consistent lack of supervision ▪ Consistent hunger ▪ Inappropriately dressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor social relationships ▪ Indiscriminate friendliness ▪ Poor concentration ▪ Low self-esteem ▪ Regularly displays fatigue or lethargic ▪ Frequently falls asleep ▪ Frequent unexplained absences

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's or vulnerable adult's emotional development, and may involve:

- a) Conveying to children or a vulnerable adult that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- b) Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's or vulnerable adult's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child or vulnerable adult participating in normal social interaction;
- c) Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
- d) Serious bullying, causing children or vulnerable adults frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children or vulnerable adults;

Emotional Abuse - Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor attachment relationship ▪ Unresponsive / neglectful behaviour towards the child's or vulnerable adults emotional needs ▪ Persistent negative comments about the child or vulnerable adult ▪ Inappropriate or inconsistent expectations ▪ Self harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low self-esteem ▪ Unhappiness, anxiety ▪ Withdrawn, insecure ▪ Attention seeking ▪ Passive or aggressive behavioural extremes

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child or vulnerable adult is aware of

what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children or vulnerable adult's in looking at, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children or vulnerable adult's to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Sexual Abuse - Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sign of blood / discharge on the child's or vulnerable adult's underclothing. ▪ Awkwardness in walking / sitting ▪ Pain or itching – genital area ▪ Bruising, scratching, bites on the inner thighs / external genitalia. ▪ Self harm ▪ Eating disorders ▪ Enuresis / encopresis ▪ Sudden weight loss or gain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sexually proactive behaviour or knowledge that is incompatible with a child's age & understanding. ▪ Drawings & or written work that is sexually explicit ▪ Self harm / Suicide attempts ▪ Running away ▪ Substance abuse ▪ Significant devaluing of self ▪ Loss of concentration

1.5 Discriminatory forms of Abuse

This form of abuse involves direct/ indirect discrimination of children or vulnerable adults because of their race, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, mental health status or age.

Discriminatory Abuse - Examples:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of culturally or gender sensitivity in care practices • Access to services denied due to lack of disability awareness and access needs of members • No attempt to address language barriers • No provision of culturally sensitive food • No awareness of importance of faith festivals etc

POLICY

3. Prevention

Autus aims to:

- Ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and vulnerable people
- Develop and then implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- Regularly review our safeguarding policy
- All Autus staff and volunteers will undertake training and annual refresher training on safeguarding vulnerable adults.
- Where poor practice is

4. Safer Recruitment and Supervision of staff/volunteers

- All staff/volunteers will complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) application if they are working with young people or vulnerable adults.
- Autus is a member of Attend and uses their DBS check service as part of our recruitment system.
- If the post holder is likely to be unsupervised at any time we will apply for an Enhanced Disclosure. A Standard Disclosure is only appropriate if the post holder is guaranteed not to have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults.
- More information can be found on the Attend website: www.attend.org.uk

5. Good Practice and Expected Behaviour

1. Always put the welfare of each young person/ child first before achieving goals.
2. Treat all young people with respect and dignity
3. Seek opportunity to have conversations with young people about keeping safe at online
4. Always work in an open environment, avoid private or unobserved situations, and avoid secrets. Contact with young people must be made where other staff can see and preferably hear you, it may be necessary to use public places such as café or another agency's premises. When having a 1:1 with a young person in a room, it should ideally have a viewing window or CCTV. Where this is not possible the door must be left open.
 - i. Where ever possible meeting rooms at the Carers Centre should be used to ensure visibility by Centre staff.
 - ii. Where service users come unaccompanied to the Autus office (for example to collect laptops or sign forms) the door must be kept open at all times.
5. Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with young people (e.g. respect personal space and boundaries by not standing/sitting too close when working with equipment)
6. Involve young people in the decisions that affect them.
7. Speak to the Safeguarding Officer if any of the following occur:
 - i. If you accidentally hurt a young person.
 - ii. If he/she seems distressed in any manner.
 - iii. If a young person appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
 - iv. If a young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

6. Unacceptable behaviour

The following are **NOT** acceptable and will be treated seriously by the organisation and may result in disciplinary action being taken by the organisation:

1. Other than as set out above in 5.4, working alone with a child, children, vulnerable adult.
2. Consuming alcohol whilst responsible for children or vulnerable adults.
3. Providing alcohol to children or allowing its supply.
4. Smoking in the presence of children.
5. Humiliating children or vulnerable adults.
6. Inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult
7. Participating in, or allowing, contact or physical games with children or vulnerable adults.
8. Travelling alone with a young person in your car or the minibus - however short the journey.
9. Having an intimate or sexual relationship with any child or vulnerable adult.
10. Making sexually explicit comments or sharing sexually explicit material.

7. How to respond to a person disclosing abuse

DO:

- Do treat any allegations seriously and act at all times towards the child as if you believe what they are saying.
- Do tell the child they are right to tell you.
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Do tell the child what you are doing, when, and who you have to tell, and keep them up to date with what is happening.
- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately.
- Do write down everything said and what was done.

DON'T:

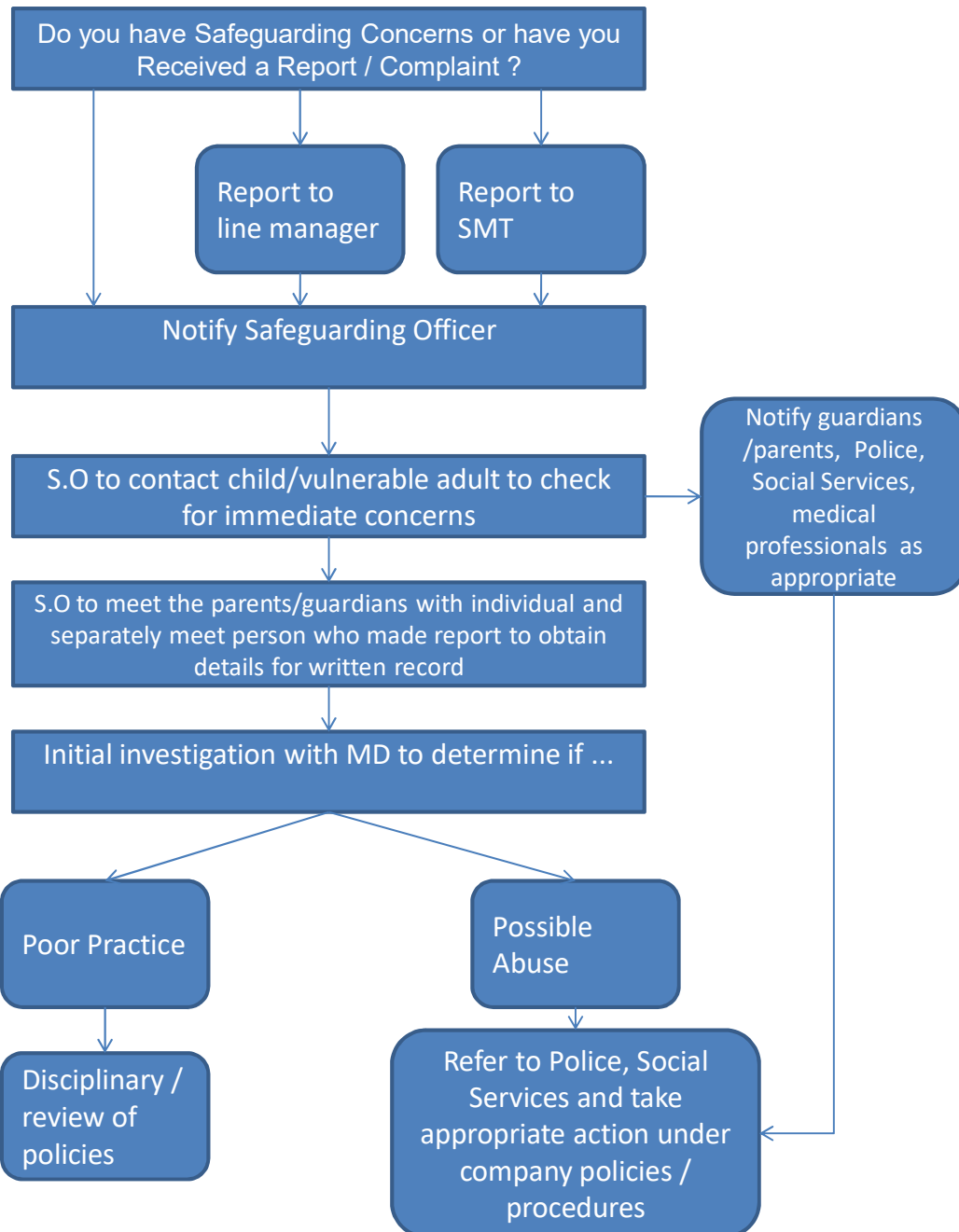
- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Don't interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to police officers or social workers, who have experience in this.
- Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt them or change the subject.
- Don't say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse.
- Don't do nothing – make sure you tell your nominated Safeguarding Children person immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to contact for further advice

PROCEDURE

- 1. Any suspected, alleged or confirmed incidents of abuse to a child or vulnerable adult must be reported.**
2. If you have safeguarding concerns about a vulnerable adult or child you should report it.
3. Reports should be made to a manager or the Safeguarding Officer.
4. The manager in receipt of a report should notify the Safeguarding Officer immediately.
5. On receiving a report the Safeguarding Officer will check that the child / vulnerable adult's immediate needs are met confirming that they are not in immediate danger or do not require medical attention, parental, moral or other support.
6. In the event that there are immediate needs the Safeguarding Officer will deal with these immediately notifying the relevant party.
7. The Safeguarding Officer will make contact with the individual concerned (and where appropriate their parent /guardian) and with the individual who reported the matter to obtain necessary information and take a written record.
8. An initial investigation will be conducted in conjunction with a Trustee who will then determine (at all times communicating with the parent /guardian where appropriate) whether the matter is an issue of poor practice or of possible abuse which requires referral to the police or Local Authority.
9. Where the matter is determined to be an incident of poor practice by a staff member or volunteer a further investigation will take place, the outcome of which may result in disciplinary action and / or review and clarification of our policies and procedures.
10. Where the matter is referred to relevant authorities on the grounds that there is a possible abuse by an employee or volunteer, the charity's disciplinary procedure will be invoked and action taken accordingly such as suspension pending investigation.
11. Where there is possible abuse by a user of our service we will suspend access to our Opensim servers pending investigation.

5. REPORTING

Safeguarding Procedure Flow Chart



8. Further Information, Advice & Guidance

Autus Safeguarding Officer - Donna Thompson 02081239302

Sexual Exploitation advice line: 0208 686 4433 ext: 61397

Parentline+ (national) 0808 800 2222

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

NSPCC Asian Child Protection helpline: 0800 096 7716

Family Rights Group: 0800 731 1696

www.frg.org.uk

Childline: 0800 1111

<http://www.childline.org.uk/>

Save the Children: 0207 703 5400

www.savethechildren.org

National Childrens Charity (NCH): 08457 626 579

www.nch.org.uk

Vulnerable Adults:

Action on Elder Abuse: 0808 808 8141

www.elderabuse.org.uk

The Anne Craft Trust: 0115 951 5400 A.C.T. - The Ann Craft Trust is concerned with facilitating the protection of all adults and children with learning disabilities who are vulnerable to abuse.

Website: <http://www.anncrafttrust.org>

Respond: 020 7383 0700 Provides services to people with learning disabilities who have experienced abuse, loss or trauma. www.respond.org.uk

Foreign Office Forced Marriages Unit

0207 008 0135