

Gloucester City Council

Safeguarding Policy

September 2017

Gloucester
City Council

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1. Introduction

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. It is primarily about protecting vulnerable adults, young people or children from abuse or neglect. It means making sure people are supported to get good access to health care and stay well.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure there is an overarching approach to Safeguarding across the organisation and that all employees, elected Members, members of the Voluntary and Community Sector and contractors delivering services on the Council's behalf are aware of their legal obligations to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The safeguarding of children and young people and the safeguarding of vulnerable adults encompasses the following types of harm:

- Safeguarding Children and Young People
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Safeguarding Adults with Care and Support Needs (Vulnerable Adults)
- Domestic Abuse (including physical, financial, sexual, psychological, emotional and coercive control)
- Stalking
- Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking/Illegal Workers
- Honour Based Violence
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Cyber bullying
- Self neglect

3. The Council's Role and Responsibilities

The council has a statutory responsibility and a duty of care to cooperate and report issues relating to safeguarding to the appropriate authorities and partner agencies.

This policy aims to raise overall awareness of safeguarding, the signs of abuse and information on what to do if any form of abuse is identified or suspected. Safeguarding is not a practice that operates in isolation; the subject cuts across every service and function that the council undertakes and as such, is embedded within the organisation.

Safeguarding Children

Local Authorities have a duty under the Children Act 2004 to ensure that they consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when carrying out their functions.

The council is a member of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children’s Board (GSCB) and has a role in identifying children, young people and vulnerable adults who may be at risk and alerting the appropriate services. All staff must ensure that they are aware of the safeguarding procedures in place within the organisation and the staff members responsible for safeguarding issues. All staff members will receive safeguarding training at induction.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

The council's role for safeguarding vulnerable adults is governed by the Care Act 2014 and the responsibilities apply to adults who:

- Have care and support needs
- Are experiencing or are at risk of abuse or neglect
- Are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

4. Definitions and Types of Abuse

Children and Young People

In accordance with guidance provided by **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010** and based on the **Children Act (1989)** and **(2004)** the terms children, child, young person or young people shall for the purposes of this policy be deemed to mean:

“Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that they have reached 16 years of age; are living independently or in further education; are a member of the armed forces; in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Acts and this policy”.

A child may be at risk of abuse in many ways:

TYPE	DEFINITION	SIGNS
Emotional	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child’s emotional development.	Conveying to children that they are worthless or inadequate; imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations, serious bullying, exploitation, isolation, segregation
Sexual	Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware what is happening,	Inappropriate sexual behaviour, use of language, fear of adults, recoiling from physical contact.

	including use of images through social media or other IT.	
Neglect	The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.	Inadequate food, clothing or shelter. Inadequate access to appropriate medical care or treatment, isolation, truanting, lateness
Physical	May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.	Unexplained bruising, burns, fractures, weight gain or loss, repeat illness.

Vulnerable Adults

A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 or over, who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) **and**:
- Is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect **and**
- 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

A vulnerable adult may be at risk of abuse in many ways:

TYPE	DEFINITION	INDICATORS
Physical	The non-accidental use of physical force that results (or could result) in bodily injury, pain or impairment including: assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication and restraint.	Unexplained bruising, cowering or flinching, bruising consistent with being hit, unexplained burns, unexplained fractures.
Domestic Abuse	An incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member	Unexplained bruising, cowering or flinching, bruising consistent with being hit.

	regardless of gender or sexuality.	
Sexual	Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without consent.	Incontinence, difficulty/discomfort in walking, excessive washing, sexually transmitted diseases, bruising/bleeding in genital areas, bruising, urinary infections
Emotional/Psychological	Acts or behaviour which impinge on the emotional health of, or which causes distress or anguish to individuals.	Disturbed sleep, anxiety, confusion, extreme submissiveness or dependency, sharp changes in behaviour, loss of confidence or appetite.
Neglect & Acts of Omission	Ignoring or withholding physical or medical care needs which result in a situation or environment detrimental to the individual.	Ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs (incl. dressing), failure to provide access to appropriate health care, withholding medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
Financial & Material Abuse	Unauthorised, fraudulent obtaining and improper use of funds, property or any resources of an adult at risk. Scamming and coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs.	Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills, unexplained withdrawals of money from accounts, personal possessions going missing, unusual interest by a friend/relative/neighbour in financial matters.
Discriminatory (including hate crime)	When values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies main stream opportunities to some groups or individuals. This includes discrimination on the grounds of race, faith or religion, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation and political views, along with racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist comments or jokes, or	Inciting others to commit abusive acts, lack of effective communication, bullying.

	comments and jokes based on a person's disability or any other form of harassment, slur or similar treatment.	
Modern Slavery	Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced and compulsory labour and domestic servitude.	Poverty, isolation, drug and alcohol misuse
Institutional/ Organisational	Where the culture of the organisations places the emphasis on the running of the establishment above the needs and care of the person.	Lack of care plans, contact with the outside world not encouraged, no flexibility or lack of choice.
Self-neglect	Neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.	A deterioration in physical appearance, lack of grooming, rapid weight gain/loss.

There are a number of specific acts that constitute abuse which could affect both adults and children;

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a collective term used for illegal procedures, such as female circumcision, which include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs, or injury to the female genital organs for a cultural or non-therapeutic reason.

Honour Based Violence (HBV)

HBV is abuse in the name of honour, covering a variety of behaviours (including crimes), mainly but not exclusively against females, where the person is being punished by their family and/or community for a perceived transgression against the 'honour' of the family or community, or is required to undergo certain activities or procedures in 'honour' of the family.

It is a form of domestic abuse which relates to a victim who does not abide by the 'rules' of an honour code. This will have been set at the discretion of relatives or community; the victims are punished for bringing shame on the family or community.

Forced Marriage

In a forced marriage you are coerced into marrying someone against your will. You may be physically threatened or emotionally blackmailed to do so. It is an abuse of human rights and cannot be justified on any religious or cultural basis.

It is not the same as an arranged marriage where you have a choice as to whether to accept the arrangement or not. The tradition of arranged marriages has operated successfully within many communities and countries for a very long time.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

'Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability'.

Stalking

The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 defines "stalking" as an offence. However, there is no legal definition, but examples include: following or spying on a person or forcing contact with the victim through any means including social media. Any of these examples carried out repeatedly or persistently can cause significant alarm or distress.

Prevent

Prevent is a government strategy which aims to raise awareness and resilience to radicalisation. It recognises that children and vulnerable adults can be susceptible to extremist views and coerced into criminal behaviour. At the heart of Prevent is safeguarding children and adults and providing early intervention to protect and divert people away from being drawn in to terrorist activity.

Modern Slavery

There are many different characteristics that distinguish slavery from other human rights violations, however only one needs to be present for slavery to exist. It involves people being forced to work through mental or physical threat, owned or controlled by an 'employer' usually through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse, dehumanised and being treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'.

Human Trafficking

Takes place when a victim is moved from one place to another for the purpose of exploitation, this could be through sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced labour, forced criminality or organ harvesting. The trafficker is able to control and exploit through violence, coercion or deception.

Cyber Crime

Cyber crime is defined as criminal activity carried out by means of computers or the internet. Criminals are increasingly exploiting the speed, convenience and anonymity of the internet to commit a diverse range of criminal activities without physical or virtual borders. These crimes can cause serious harm and pose significant threats to victims worldwide.

Hate Crime

The law defines a hate crime as an act of violence, hostility and intimidation against someone because of their identity or because they are seen as being different. Hate incidents also happen because someone thinks you are different. Victim Support advises that “they may not be a crime but can feel like it”.

5. Responsible Leads

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Gloucester City Council has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and an Operational Safeguarding Lead who are responsible for championing the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Their role is also to support staff and provide guidance and advice to aid implementation of this policy and in make a referral. In the event of concerns arising in relation to a member of staff or a volunteer then the Human Resources Manager should be notified.

Safeguarding Lead: Anne Brinkhoff, Corporate Director

Operational Lead: Emily Jones

Corporate Leadership Team (CLT)

Gloucester City Council’s CLT will ensure that:

1. The Council meets its legal obligations.
2. Where applicable, the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is considered in strategies, plans and services.
3. The best safeguarding practices are embedded and maintained across all services to ensure continuous improvement and compliance with national and local policies.
4. All safeguarding matters relating to safeguarding are expedited in a timely manner and treated seriously.

5. Support staff and members on all aspects of Safeguarding and ensure procedures are adhered to.

Service Managers

Gloucester City Council's service managers will ensure that:

1. The safeguarding policy is adhered to across the organisation
2. Staff complete and implement the appropriate safeguarding training
3. Staff handling safeguarding issues are fully supported
4. They take responsibility for the quality of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults in their service area
5. All staff and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are subject to the Disclosure and Barring checks appropriate to their role and legislative requirements.

Human Resources

Gloucester City Council's Human Resource Business Partner will ensure that:

1. The relevant policies are in place e.g. Safer Recruitment and Disciplinary Procedures
2. Managers and members are supported in the use of these policies directly and indirectly associated with safeguarding
3. Provide support with the pre-employment checks (including through the Disclosure and Barring Service).
4. All staff are trained in safeguarding policies and procedures during induction.

Staff

Gloucester City Council's Staff will:

1. Treat all safeguarding matters seriously
2. Report concerns as per the reporting procedure and complete the relevant on-line form
3. Be aware of the policies.
4. Complete safeguarding training relevant to their role

Elected Members

Elected members are uniquely placed to support the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults within their community. They can also provide effective leadership to ensure that the council is fulfilling its corporate responsibility. Elected members should always:

1. Report their concerns about a child or vulnerable adult's welfare or someone else's behaviour in regards to a child or vulnerable adult as outlined in this policy
2. Seek advice from or raise concerns with the Lead Safeguarding Officer as and when necessary

6. Who the Safeguarding Policy Affects

In addition to employees and elected Members of the Council, this policy shall also apply to the following areas:

Procurement

Any contracts awarded with external agencies for the provision of goods and services must make specific reference to safeguarding and the duties imposed on staff. Steps must be taken to ensure the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is commensurate with the type of service being provided on behalf of, or in partnership with the Council.

Contractors

The Council will ensure that:

1. All contractors providing services directly related to children, young people and vulnerable adults have a safeguarding policy and practices which complement the council's requirements related to safeguarding
2. Contractors providing a service to the council (such as maintenance work at a council property) will be made aware of the council's procedures and policies
3. Council staff will ensure that relevant safeguarding practices are adopted by the contractor

Partners

All partners working with the council must have regard to safeguarding. For joint projects, partner agencies will be required to pass a copy of their safeguarding policy to the council to ensure it aligns with the council's safeguarding requirements or alternatively, where no such policy exists, the partner will be required to adopt this policy for the duration of the project. Taxi drivers licensed by the council must attend specific safeguarding training.

Voluntary and Community Sector

Any volunteers or community groups operating either in their own right as individuals or as part of a larger organisation on behalf of the council working with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults will be required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check and will be made aware of the council's Safeguarding Policy as part of their overall induction.

Modern Apprentices, Work Experience and Workers under the age of 18

Staff will need to be aware that the above duty will apply to their interaction with work experience and modern apprentice workers under the age of 18. Such workers would still be deemed as children under this policy, whilst also themselves being responsible under the

duty imposed by Section 11 of the Children Act (2004). It will be necessary to consider the impact of this in all risk assessments carried out in relation to this member of staff.

If a work experience placement involves working with a member of staff off site or working with a member of staff on their own for longer than half a day, the students' parents or guardians should be informed prior to the work experience placement. In addition when the student goes off-site the employee must advise a Senior Officer where they are going, the reason for the visit and how long the visit will take.

7. Safeguarding Practices

Safer Recruitment

Gloucester City Council operates safer recruitment principles which are followed for all staff appointments.

Training

Line managers are responsible for identifying that members of staff in relevant posts have the appropriate level of training for their role. All staff and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults must attend safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

Safeguarding Allegations against a Member of Staff

The Council takes seriously any allegations or complaints about the conduct of staff and volunteers in respect of their contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults. All allegations or complaints received by the Council will be investigated fully, and where applicable action will be taken against the member of staff or volunteer via the disciplinary procedure. If deemed necessary the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended whilst the investigation takes place. The decision to suspend lies ultimately with the Corporate Director with responsibility for Safeguarding.

In the event of a serious allegation against a member of staff or volunteer, the Council will involve the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) employed by Gloucestershire County Council if it involves a child and the Head of Safeguarding if it involves an adult.

Support for Staff/Volunteers

Support will be provided for any member of staff or volunteer subject to an allegation as indicated in the Council's disciplinary procedure.

The Council assures all staff and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith (without malicious intent) report his or her concerns about a colleague's practice or the possibility that a child may be being abused or bullied.

The person who receives information concerning a suspected case of abuse by another member of staff or volunteer should make a full record of what has been said as soon as possible and pass the information on to their Line Manager or Head of Service.

8. Safeguarding Procedure

Listening to Children and Vulnerable Adults

As adults with trust and influence, council staff are in a powerful position to recognise and receive information about abuse. However, it is not their responsibility to decide if a child or vulnerable adult is being abused; their role is to act on their concerns.

If a child tells a member of staff about potential or alleged abuse:

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what they have to say, without making any judgement.
- Try not to ask questions, but if you have to, make sure they are open-ended questions to clarify understanding and not to probe or investigate.
- Do encourage them to talk.
- Do not give an opinion or offer advice.
- Be honest with them about what you can and cannot do.
- Tell them that you are not able to keep what they have told you secret.
- Tell them that you will try to find them the help they need.
- When they have finished, make a detailed note of what they have said, using their words
- where possible, and then sign and date the record and pass that information on to the
- nominated safeguarding lead.
- Do not contact or confront the individual who is alleged to be responsible.
- Re-assure the child / young person / vulnerable adult that they have done the right thing.
- Maintain confidentiality and do not discuss with others.

What to do if you have concerns

It is not the responsibility of an employee to take individual responsibility for deciding whether or not abuse is actually taking place. However, there is a responsibility to protect children and vulnerable adults in order that appropriate agencies (e.g. local social services) can then make enquiries and take any necessary action.

The council recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal from those responsible for the malpractice.

In being vigilant of child and vulnerable adult protection it is crucial that all employees with responsibility for care are aware of the steps used to recognise signs of abuse. In these situations, or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to one of the Council's Safeguarding Lead Officers as soon as possible.

Once the incident/allegation has been reported it is the responsibility of the council's Safeguarding Lead Officer to inform the appropriate agency without delay.

Dealing with Allegations Against Staff

Should an individual member of staff become aware of an allegation (against a colleague) of an incident of child abuse taking place, or having taken place, they should follow the procedure below:

- Take the allegation seriously. It is your duty to consider any allegation to be potentially dangerous to the child and therefore report it
- As part of your report, make a written record of any details of which you are aware
- Report the allegation to the Safeguarding Lead Officer giving details of the allegation, how you became aware of it and any other relevant details. Try not to cloud your report with your opinions or judgements
- Do not judge or investigate. As an employee, it is important not to lose focus of your role. By reporting an allegation quickly, any necessary investigations and/or judgement can be made by trained professionals, i.e. social services and/or the police.

Maintain Confidentiality

It is extremely important that any allegations are not discussed (unless absolutely necessary) as any breaches could be damaging to the child or vulnerable adult and to any investigation which may follow. Any requests for information from members of the public (including parents, guardians or carers) or the media should be directed to the Safeguarding Lead Officer.

Support

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need. Use of help lines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process.

Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children).

Where such an allegation is made, the person should follow the procedure as detailed above contacting the safeguarding lead who would then notify the police.

What must I do?

Immediately share your concerns verbally with the designated safeguarding lead officer:

Anne Brinkhoff, Corporate Director 01452 396745

Children

If appropriate they will complete a safeguarding referral with you. Speak to social care. If you think a child is at immediate risk of significant harm contact the Children's Helpdesk on 01452 426565. The referral must be made on a Multi Agency Service Request Form (MARF) found on the Gloucestershire Social Care webpage: <http://www.gscb.org.uk/frequently-used-forms/>

If you have concern but are not really too sure, ring a Community Social Worker or the Early Help Partnership on 1452 427877 or 01452 328048.

Vulnerable Adults

Adult Helpdesk 01452 426868 or when out of hours the Emergency Duty Team 01452 614758. The Safeguarding Adults team secure generic email address is: safeadults@gloucestershiregcsx.gov.uk

Modern Slavery Concerns

As a public authority, we have a Statutory Duty to notify the Home Office to help build a clearer picture of this hidden crime.

If the victim is under 18 years, no consent is needed.

If the victim is over 18 years, consent should be sought. If it is not obtained, the Home Office will not investigate but they will refer to the local police who will assess the situation and follow up if appropriate. The report to the Home Office should be made on form MS1 which can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508818/Duty_to_Notify_MS1_Form_Version_2.0_.PDF

Hate Crime

Hate crimes and incidents should be reported to either the Police on 101, or 999 in an emergency, to Victim Support on 0800 077 8460 or you can text HATE to 80800 and someone will call back within 2 days. Alternatively, reports can be made to Crimestoppers on 0800 555111

Prevent

Prevent concerns should be reported to the local police force by calling 101, or in an emergency 999. You can also report concerns online and get more information at www.preventtragedies.co.uk

Information for social services or the police about suspected abuse:

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The name, age and date of birth of the child or vulnerable adult.

- Their home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

Other Useful Numbers

Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service	0845 602 9035
Gloucestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre	01452 526770
Family Information Service	0800 542 0202
Police Non Emergency	101
Police Emergency	999
NSPCC	0808 800 5000
Childline	0800 1111
Crimestoppers	0800 555 111
Victim Support	01452 317444
Age UK	01452 422660
Samaritans	01452 306333
Modern Slavery National Helpline	0800 121 7000