

Think Child – Think Adult – Think Family

Guidance for Children's and Adults Services in responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Remember

Children practitioners have a responsibility to safeguard adults at risk

Adult practitioners have a responsibility to safeguard children

PLEASE NOTE This is supporting guidance to assist practitioners in implementing the existing policies in respect of safeguarding children and adults at risk.

This guidance does not replace the existing policies which should always be read first when a practitioner wants to know how to respond to safeguarding concerns

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1. Introduction

There are significant differences in the laws and policies that shape how we safeguard children and how we safeguard adults. The legal framework to protect children is contained in the [Children Act 2004](#), [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#) and for adults, [the Care Act \(2014\)](#).

However, the overarching objective for both is to enable children and adults to live a life free from abuse or neglect. This cannot be achieved by any single agency. Every organisation and person who comes into contact with a child or adult has a responsibility and a role to play to help keep children and adults safe.

This guidance is a collaboration between [Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership \(SSCP\)](#) and [Salford Safeguarding Adults Board \(SSAB\)](#). It provides an overview and should be read in conjunction with legislative frameworks, specific protocols and guidance relevant to the circumstances. These include but are not limited to:

For Adults

- [SSAB Multi-agency Policy and Procedures policy, procedures](#) and [guidance](#)

For Children

- [Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children Procedures Manual including the](#)
- [SSCP Pathway Guidance](#) and SSCP [Policies and procedures](#)
- SSCP [Support and Safeguarding Guidance](#)

There are many situations where children may be living with or regularly having contact with adults with care and support needs who are at risk of abuse or neglect, often referred to as 'adults at risk'. Whilst going about their duties, children's practitioners may become aware of adults at risk in the household, extended family, or a significant other related or unrelated to the child

Similarly, Adult practitioners may also have concerns about children with whom they come into contact, in the course of assessing an adult. In some cases the adult at risk may be a parent or in other cases they may be a member of the same household, extended family or a significant other related or unrelated to the child and/or adult.

Learning from case reviews have shown that close joint working between practitioners involved with the whole family can impact positively on child protection planning and is vital

for a comprehensive assessment and understanding of risk¹. Eileen Munro's review of the child protection system², called for a wider family focus to safeguarding children, so that all staff are aware of their responsibilities, and recognise that meeting the needs of family members who may put children at risk benefits the child, the adult, and the family as a whole.

In order to safeguard both children and adults at risk, it is essential that children's and adults services work together effectively.

The SSCP and SSAB have aligned strategic priorities for 2023 – 2026 which are:

- Working to Prevent abuse and neglect
- Working to Protect those who experience abuse and neglect
- Voice of the Child/Adult
- Communication and Engagement
- Safeguarding Effectiveness

For further information regarding the strategic priorities visit the individual websites

- [Salford Safeguarding Children's Partnership website](#)
- [Salford Safeguarding Adults' Board Website](#)

2. Definitions and Legal Frameworks

For Children

A child is defined in the Children Act (2004) as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined, in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#), as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

¹ *Biennial analysis of the Impact of Serious Case Reviews 2005-2007*, Brandon et al, 2009 and [Complexity and challenge: a triennial analysis of serious case reviews 2014 to 2017](#), Brandon et al 2020

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175391/Munro-Review.pdf

All children have access to universal services. Where there are more complex needs, help may be provided under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (children in need). Where there are child protection concerns (reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm) local authority social care services must make enquiries for a child who lives or is found in their area and decide if any action must be taken under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Such enquiries, supported by other organisations and agencies, as appropriate, should be initiated where there are concerns about all forms of abuse and neglect.

Children in Need

Children in need are those, defined under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, who are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or their health or development are likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of services, or who are disabled. Local authorities have a duty to provide services for children in need to safeguard and promote their welfare.

When assessing children in need and providing services, specialist assessments may be required and, where possible, should be co-ordinated so that the child and family experience a coherent process and a single plan of action.

Some children are in need because they are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children, and gives local authorities (LA's) a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their day-to-day lives. Harm can be categorised as physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect.

For an Adult at Risk

The Care Act 2014 places a duty of enquiry on local authorities where it has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in its area:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs),
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or the risk of it.

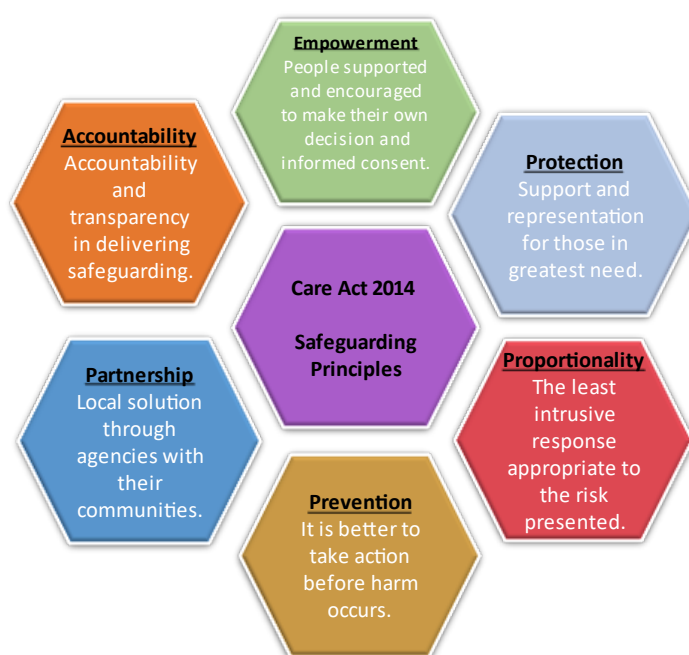
The Local Authority **must** make (or cause to be made) whatever enquiries it thinks necessary to enable it to decide whether any action should be taken in the adult's case (whether under this Part or otherwise) and, if so, what and by whom.

What constitutes abuse and/or neglect of adults?

[The Care and Support Statutory Guidance](#) sets out the different types of abuse / neglect that adults can experience which includes: physical abuse, domestic violence and abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, financial or material abuse, modern slavery, discriminatory abuse, organisational abuse, neglect and acts of omission, self-neglect.

Safeguarding Principles

The Care Act statutory guidance defines 6 principles that should underpin all safeguarding functions, actions and decisions. The SSCP has also adopted these safeguarding principles.



Making Safeguarding Personal

In addition to the 6 key safeguarding principles, it is important that safeguarding processes are not so prescriptive that the individual circumstances of the people affected cannot be taken into account. Making safeguarding personal is an approach to safeguarding that is person-led and outcomes-focussed. Based on conversations with people the best approach to safeguarding is agreed and this takes into account the views, wishes, preferences, histories, circumstances and lifestyle of the adult.

3. Local Multi Agency Policy and Procedures

- [Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children Procedures Manual including the](#)
- [SSCP Pathway Guidance](#) and SSCP [Policies and procedures](#)
- [Link to SSAB](#) multi-agency safeguarding policy and procedures

In Salford there are clear and comprehensive single points of contact to report concerns.

As a practitioner, if you have concerns or need advice or guidance please see below:

If either an adult or child is in immediate danger or risk to life, call the police on 999.

4. Information Sharing and Consent

Information sharing is an important part of multi-agency working and information should be shared with consent wherever possible. However sometimes, agencies will need to share information without consent to prevent or protect people from harm / abuse.

All practitioners should access training on information sharing and when it is appropriate to share information within and between organisations.

For more guidance on information sharing, please refer to:

- [The Greater Manchester safeguarding children procedures](#)
- [The SSAB website – guidance on information sharing and confidentiality](#)
- [The SSCP website – guidance on information sharing and confidentiality](#)

5. Multi-agency training and learning

The SSAB and SSCP both provide multi-agency training and learning opportunities which includes face to face training, online training, bite size briefings, learning events, 7-minute briefings, YouTube videos / event recordings etc.

For more information, please see the [SSCP Training Programme](#) and the [SSAB Multi-agency training](#) and learning opportunities.