



#techmums Safeguarding Policy

Our approach

#techmums makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe.

Our goal is to enable the #techmums user. We focus on supporting them in finding their own solutions to challenges that pose a risk to their wellbeing, ensuring they have the ability to make positive sustainable changes to their lives.

In the process of regular activities, #techmums' employees, directors, and volunteers regularly come into contact with potentially vulnerable adults; this policy seeks to ensure that #techmums undertakes its responsibilities with regard to protection of vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns timely and appropriately.

What is safeguarding?

The term Safeguarding is used to cite actions and measures which protect people's health, human rights, and wellbeing.

Safeguarding ensures individuals can live in freedom, safely – out of harm's way, free from distress and neglect.

Who is this policy for?

The policy establishes a framework to support paid and unpaid staff, volunteers, and partner organisations in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations.

All staff and volunteers are expected to follow this policy.

The key objectives of this policy are for all employees and volunteers of #techmums to:

- have an overview of children & adult safeguarding.
- be clear about their responsibility to children & safeguard adults.
- ensure the necessary actions are taken where children or adults with care and support needs are deemed to be at risk.
- signpost relevant networks and services when appropriate (ie - social services, local charities, etc when non emergencies occur). Creating a link of support in order to provide positive changes.

- prioritise outcomes for service users which evidence the reduction of risk; the minimisation of the impact of harm.
- prioritise confidence and ability in the client user at a constant; even in times of crisis. Ensuring they feel informed and in control in the event of any further steps are taken that have been highlighted in this policy package.

The Law

Under the Human Rights Act 1998, everyone has the right to live free from abuse and neglect.
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>

We at #techmums uphold the same standards required by law for bodies which hold charity status.

The Children Act 2004 and ensured every organisation had to have a “*named person*” for *safeguarding* children and vulnerable people - aka a Designated Safeguarding officer.

We regularly monitor key changes in legislation and have updated this safeguarding policy to reflect the most recent changes (2019).

Safeguarding Children: for the latest government guidance documents:

<https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/safeguarding-children/latest>

Designated Safeguarding Officer

#techmums has an appointed individual who is responsible for dealing with any Safeguarding Adults concerns.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer(s) for Safeguarding Adults within #techmums is:

Name Lauren Allison

Telephone Number 07795568283

Email lauren@techmums.co

The roles and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:

- to ensure that all staff including volunteers and trustees are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they have concerns that a vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or has experienced abuse or neglect.
- to ensure that concerns are acted on, clearly recorded and referred to an Adult Social Care team where necessary.
- to reinforce the utmost need for confidentiality and to ensure that staff and volunteers are adhering to good practice with regard to confidentiality and security. This is because it is around the time that a person starts to challenge abuse that the risks of increasing intensity of abuse are greatest.
- to ensure that staff and volunteers working directly with service users who have experienced abuse, or who are experiencing abuse, are well supported and receive appropriate supervision.

If appropriate staff or volunteers will be given support and afforded protection if necessary under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998: they will be dealt with in a fair and equitable manner and they will be kept informed of any action that has been taken and its outcome.

Prevention and Risk

#techmums will not tolerate the abuse of adults in any of its forms and is committed to safeguarding adults with care and support needs from harm.

All adults should be able to live free from fear and harm. But some may find it hard to get the help and support they need to stop abuse.

An adult may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to many reasons, including their mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss or physical or learning disabilities.

We recognise these risk factors and as a result #techmums adheres to following the six key principles that underpin safeguarding work (See [Care Act guidance](#))

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership

● Accountability

Responsibilities

All staff (paid or unpaid), directors, volunteers, and partners have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.

Additionally, all partners must ensure that they have conducted a Disclosure and Barring Services check on anyone delivering #techmums content, hosting events, or otherwise interacting with children or vulnerable adults.

For more, visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

#techmums recognises that it has a duty to act on reports, or suspicions of abuse or neglect. It also acknowledges that taking action in cases of adult abuse is never easy.

#techmums will not tolerate the abuse of adults in the organisation and staff and volunteers should be made aware of how this policy can be accessed.

#techmums will uphold the Duty of Care whilst working with mothers, their children, and their wider families.

All staff, management, trustees and volunteers at #techmums are expected to report any concerns to the named person for safeguarding.

If the allegation is against one of #techmums' members, volunteers, trustees or directors, seek advice from #techmums' Designated Safeguarding Officer.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer should be responsible for providing acknowledgement of the referral and brief feedback to the person raising the original concern.

Feedback should be given in a way that will not make the situation worse or breach the Data Protection Act and EU General Data Protection Regulation.

If the police are involved, they should be consulted prior to giving feedback to the referrer to ensure any criminal investigation is not affected.

Safeguarding Log

All allegations/concerns should be recorded in the Safeguarding Log.

The information should be factual and not based on opinions, record what the person tells you, what you have seen and witnesses if appropriate.

Please contact the Safeguarding Officer if you require more information/need to lodge a safeguarding concern.

How to respond if you receive a disclosure

- Reassure the person concerned
- Listen to what they are saying
- Record what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief
- Tell them that the information will be treated seriously
- Don't start to investigate or ask detailed or probing questions
- Don't promise to keep it a secret

Priorities if you witness abuse or abuse has just taken place:

- To call an ambulance if required
- To call the police if a crime has been committed
- To preserve evidence
- To keep yourself, staff, volunteers, and service users safe
- To inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer in your organisation
- To record what happened in the #techmums' Safeguarding Log with the Designated Safeguarding Officer

All situations of abuse or alleged abuse will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

Types of abuse

The [Care and Support statutory guidance](#) sets out the 10 main types of abuse:

- Physical abuse - If someone deliberately hurts or injures you or another person
- Neglect - ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs
- Sexual abuse - abusive sexual behavior by one person upon another
- Psychological abuse - involves the regular and deliberate use of a range of words and non-physical actions used with the purpose to manipulate, hurt, and weaken
- Financial abuse - controlling a person's ability to acquire, use and maintain their own money and financial resources.
- Discriminatory abuse - when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals.
- Organisational abuse - the mistreatment of people brought about by poor or inadequate care or support; systematic poor practice that affects the whole care setting. It occurs when the individual's wishes and needs are sacrificed for the smooth running of a group, service or organisation.
- Domestic violence - incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and violent behaviour, including sexual violence, in the majority of cases by a partner or ex-partner, but also by a family member or carer.
- Modern Slavery - is the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, women or men through the use of force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means for the purpose of exploitation.
- Self-neglect - a behavioral condition in which an individual neglects to attend to their basic needs, such as personal hygiene, appropriate clothing, feeding, or tending appropriately to any medical conditions they have.

However, you should keep an open mind about what constitutes abuse or neglect as it can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered.

What are the possible signs of abuse?

Abuse and neglect can be difficult to spot. You should be alert to the following possible signs of abuse and neglect:

- Depression, self-harm or suicide attempts
- Fear or anxiety
- The person has an injury that is difficult to explain (such as bruises, finger marks, 'non-accidental' injury, neck, shoulders, chest and arms)
- The person is experiencing insomnia

- The person seems frightened, or frightened of physical contact
- The person is withdrawn, changes in behaviour

You should ask the person if you are unsure about their well-being as there may be other explanations to the above presentation.

Who abuses and neglects children / adults?

Abuse can happen anywhere, even in somebody's own home. Most often abuse takes place by others who are in a position of trust and power. It can take place whether an adult lives alone or with others. Anyone can carry out abuse or neglect, including:

- partners;
- other family members;
- neighbours;
- friends;
- local residents;
- paid staff or professionals; and
- volunteers and strangers.

Confidentiality

#techmums is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information around Safeguarding issues should be shared internally. All staff and volunteers must share concerns in a timely manner.

All disclosures/concerns should be recorded in the Safeguarding Log . The information should be factual and not based on opinions, record what the person tells you, what you have seen and witnesses if appropriate.

The information that is recorded will be kept secure and will comply with GDPR data protection.

#techmums expects all staff, volunteers, trustees to maintain confidentiality at all times. In line with Data Protection law #techmums does not share information if not required. It should however be noted that information should be shared with authorities if children or adults are deemed to be at risk of immediate harm.

Communications, Training, & Support

#techmums ensures that all staff and volunteers receive Internal Safeguarding training on safeguarding children & adults as they may come across those in need of support and those who may be at risk of experiencing abuse.

Children and Adults may report things of concern to staff or volunteers who should be equipped with the knowledge around safeguarding and be confident to identify that abuse is taking place and action is required.

All staff, and volunteers will be trained to share concerns with the DSO or their manager, as soon as possible.

All staff and volunteers should be clear about the core values of #techmums and commitment to safeguarding children and adults.

Professional Boundaries

Professional boundaries are what define the limits of a relationship between a #techmums staff (including volunteer) and a client. They are a set of standards we agree to uphold that allows this necessary and often close relationship to exist while ensuring the correct detachment is kept in place.

#techmums expects staff, directors, volunteers, and partners to protect the professional integrity of both themselves and the organisation. Examples of behaviours which should be considered include:

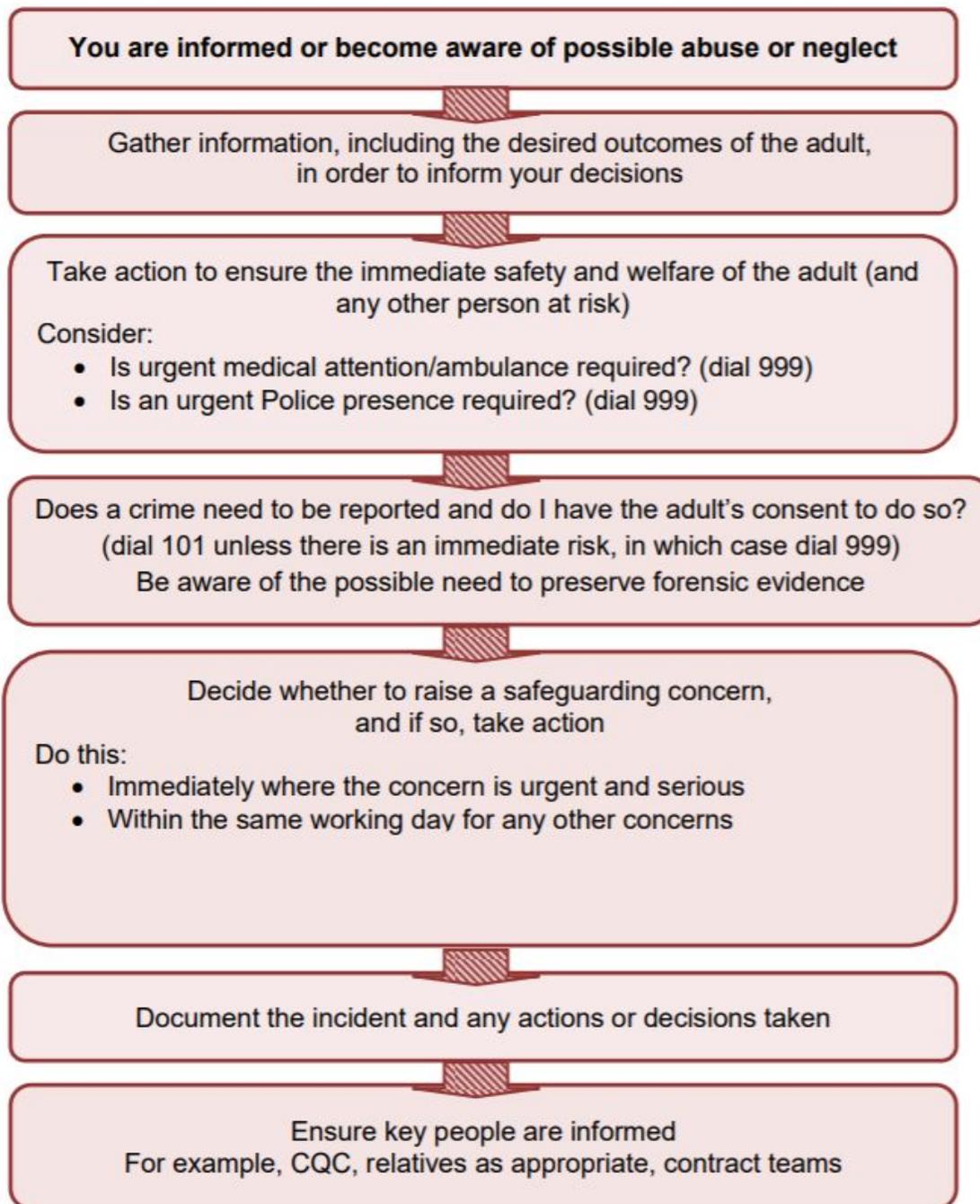
- Use of abusive language & inappropriate behaviour / language
- Use of punishment or chastisement
- Passing on service users' personal contact details
- Degree of accessibility to service users (e.g. not providing personal contact details)
- Taking family members to a service user's home
- Selling to or buying items from a service user
- Accepting responsibility for any valuables on behalf of a client
- Accepting money as a gift/borrowing money from or lending money to service users
- Accepting gifts/rewards or hospitality from organisation as an inducement for either doing/ not doing something in their official capacity
- Cautious or avoidance of personal contact with clients



If the professional boundaries and/or policies are breached this could result in disciplinary procedures or enactment of the allegation management procedures or termination of an agreement with #techmums and appropriate legal follow up.

Raising A Safeguarding Concern

To raise a safeguarding concern, the following flow chart details the steps that must be followed:



With thanks and acknowledgements to West and North Yorkshire and York regional Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures from which this flowchart has been adopted:

<http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/Documents/health-care-advice/adult-services/safeguarding/safeguarding-adults-from-abuse/summary-guide-policy-procedures.pdf>

Further information, research, and resources:

(#techmums takes no responsibility for the links below from Jan 2020)

1 - Free online training by Herefordshire council:

<https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/training/free-online-awareness-training/>

2-Ann Craft trust safeguarding checklist:

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/checklist-overview/checklist-individual/>

3- NSPCC learning podcast:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/podcast/>

4- Safeguarding Children: for the latest government guidance documents:

<https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/safeguarding-children/latest>

5 - Statement Of Government Policy On Adult Safeguarding, Department of Health:

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/kpi/scwru/pubs/2011/dh16may11.pdf>