Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy



**It is not up to you to decide whether a child or vulnerable adult is suffering harm because of abuse or neglect, but it is up to you to report any concerns as soon as possible.**

**Contents**

[1. Introduction 3](#_Toc61449664)

[2. Policy Statement 3](#_Toc61449665)

[3. Aim of the Policy 3](#_Toc61449666)

[4. Scope of Policy 4](#_Toc61449667)

[5. Prevent 5](#_Toc61449668)

[6. Review 6](#_Toc61449669)

[7. Responsibilities 6](#_Toc61449670)

[8. Allegations Against Employees or Members 8](#_Toc61449671)

[9. Funding and Grants 9](#_Toc61449672)

[10. Hiring Facilities to Others 9](#_Toc61449673)

[11. Tendering and Contracting Out Services 9](#_Toc61449674)

[12. Out of Hours Working 10](#_Toc61449675)

[13. Confidentiality 10](#_Toc61449676)

[14. Information Sharing and Record Keeping 10](#_Toc61449677)

[15. Complaints Procedure 10](#_Toc61449678)

[16. Recruitment 11](#_Toc61449679)

[17. Training 11](#_Toc61449680)

[18. Safeguarding Children 12](#_Toc61449681)

[19. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults 14](#_Toc61449682)

[20. Procedures for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults 15](#_Toc61449683)

21. Responding to Allegations and Suspicions of Abuse…………………………………………..15

22. Responding to Suspicions About an Employee, or Member ………………………………....16

[23. Safeguarding Code of Conduct and Good Practice 17](#_Toc61449684)

[24. Legislation /Guidance 17](#_Toc61449685)

[25. Useful Contacts and Sources of information 18](#_Toc61449686)

[Appendix A 19](#_Toc61449687)

[Appendix B 22](#_Toc61449688)

[Appendix C 24](#_Toc61449689)

**Appendices**

**Appendix A** Safeguarding Children Concern Form

**Appendix B** Safeguarding Adult Concern Form

**Appendix C** Safeguarding Procedure

# 1. Introduction

1.1 East Hampshire District Council delivers a varied range of services and functions which can bring employees and members into contact with children or vulnerable adults. This could be either as the main part of their role or indirectly when they are carrying out their work such as during a home visit, working outdoors in a public space or seeing customers in a reception area.

1.2 East Hampshire District Council recognises that we all have a responsibility to protect children and vulnerable adults and has developed a safeguarding policy which includes the Prevent duties, (Counter Terrorism & Security agenda) to ensure that effective practices are in place for all the councils’ activities.

1.3 East Hampshire District Council believes that all children and vulnerable adults have the right to be safe, happy, and healthy and deserve protection from abuse. The council is committed to safeguarding all children and vulnerable adults using any of its services and involved in any of its activities, and to treat them with respect during their interactions with the council.

1.4 This policy is written in accordance with The Children Act 2004, The Care Act 2014 and associated guidance.

# 2. Policy Statement

2.1 East Hampshire District Council is committed to practices that protect children and vulnerable adults from harm regardless of age, gender, disability, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic as covered by the Equality Act 2010. Employees and members accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop self-awareness of the issues that cause children and vulnerable adult’s harm.

# 3. Aim of the Policy

3.1 The aims of the policy are to:

* Clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties within the scope of the policy.
* Support the promotion of a safe working environment and a culture of care in which the rights of all children and vulnerable adults are protected and respected.
* Promote procedures, codes of conduct and best practice in how employees and members interact with children and vulnerable adults while providing council services.

* + Develop clear guidance and procedures for those employees and members working with children and vulnerable adults and ensure through training and support that they are aware of these and can implement them
	+ Provide a framework for developing partnerships with appropriate external bodies’ e.g. Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board to ensure that the policy continues to reflect legal and best practice requirements in respect of the responsibility of care of children and vulnerable adults
	+ Enable information sharing about safeguarding concerns with relevant agencies whilst involving parents/carers, children, and vulnerable adults where applicable.
	+ Support the procedures for the safe recruitment of employees and members in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance.
	+ Provide effective management for employees through supervision, support, and training.

# 4. Scope of Policy

4.1 The policy is in respect of the council’s responsibility towards:

* Children: legally defined as any person under the age of 18 including unborn children (The Children Act 2004). From this point the terms child or children will be used to refer to this group.
* The Care Act 2014 refers to an ‘adult at risk’ of abuse or neglect with care and support needs however for this policy we will retain the term vulnerable adult.
* The employees of the council who will encounter children or vulnerable adults during their work.
* Members of the district council when on council business.
* Contractors when carrying out work on behalf of East Hampshire District Council.
* The term ‘parent/ carer’ is used throughout as a generic term to represent parents, carers and guardians for both children and vulnerable adults.
* The policy covers all functions and services of the council.

4.2 Child protection is defined in The Children Act 2004 as:

* Protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm because of abuse or neglect.

4.3 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

* Protecting children from maltreatment
* Preventing impairment of children’s’ health or development
* Ensuring that children are growing up and living in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
* Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

4.4 It is also important to recognise that in providing services, the council is not acting in loco parentis (in place of the parent)

4.5 Adult Safeguarding is defined in the Care Act 2014 as:

An adult at risk has:

* needs for care and support (whether the local authority is meeting these or not)
* is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect

**and**

* as a result of these needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or risk of it.

4.6 The Mental Capacity Act 2015 and Code of Practice should be adhered to by employees who work with members of the public who lack capacity.

4.7 This policy is to be used in conjunction with the district council’s:

* Equality Policy
* Complaints Procedure
* Disciplinary Policy
* Whistleblowing Policy
* Social Media Policy
* ICT Security Policy
* Lone Working Procedures (individual team versions)
* Recruitment Policy
* DBS Policy
* Code of Conduct

East Hampshire District Council is committed to regularly reviewing its policies and good practice.

# 5. Prevent

5.1 Prevent is a requirement of the Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 and places a duty on specified authorities in the exercise of their functions to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into extremism and terrorism. In accordance with guidance, Prevent is included as part of our responsibilities to safeguard vulnerable groups and when using this policy should be considered in the same context as any other safeguarding concern.

5.2 Extremists are known to target vulnerable children and adults to radicalise them to their ideology.

5.3 Radicalisation is usually a process not an event. During that process, behaviours as well as opinions are likely to change. These changes may be apparent to the friends, families and work colleagues of the person concerned and may include a change of ideology and beliefs held, appearance, language used, peer groups and interests.

5.4 East Hampshire District Council is a specified authority and are required to:

* + Offer training of staff to understand Prevent
	+ Report any concerns via the agreed reporting procedure which in Hampshire will follow the same process as used to report safeguarding concerns into the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.
	+ Feed into Channel Panel as required with a multi-agency approach to identify and provide voluntary support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

# 6. Review

6.1 This policy and associated guidance will be reviewed annually or whenever there is a change in the related legislation. This will ensure the document is fit for purpose and up to date and compliant with our Section 11 duties of the Children Act 2004 and any other relevant legislation.

# 7. Responsibilities

7.1 Responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies at all levels of the council. We have a duty to comply with and take part in any multi-agency safeguarding arrangements put in place with regards the vulnerable groups we are working with such as attendance at statutory protection conferences.

7.2 **Cabinet** are responsible for ensuring that the council has a policy, which adequatelyprovides protection for children and vulnerable adults in receipt of its services and for the regular review of this policy in the light of changes to legislation.

7.3 **Members** are responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with and understand thepolicies and procedures relating to their role which may bring them into contact with children and vulnerable adults either directly or indirectly and raise any concerns appropriately.

7.4 **Heads of Service** are responsible for assisting HR and other related officers in performingtheir safeguarding functions primarily around:

* Identifying those services and posts that are likely to have an involvement with children and vulnerable adults.
* Ensuring that employees whose duties will involve contact with children or vulnerable adults are screened at the appropriate level and are appropriately qualified and/or trained in working with these groups.
* Ensure a risk assessment is carried out and updated regularly for any staff member who is recruited for whom there has been information released on their DBS.
* Ensuring that all necessary procedures and practices are in place to provide adequate protection both for children and vulnerable adults and protection for the employees working with them.
* Ensuring that proper records are kept of any incidents occurring within their service area and that these are held securely and passed on to the Safeguarding Lead or the Monitoring Officer if the incident involves an employee.
* Ensure managers across their service have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training if they have teams who come in to contact with members of the public.

7.5 **Human Resources Service** is responsible for:

* Working with Heads of Service in maintaining a record of those posts that are likely to work with children or vulnerable adults and identifying the level of involvement and the appropriate level of screening required.
* Ensuring that recruitment procedures are robust and that information pertinent to working with these groups is obtained during the recruitment procedure.
* Ensuring that all safeguarding and DBS checks are carried out and repeated after 3 years at the level required in respect of every role identified involving contact with children and vulnerable adults.
* Ensuring that employees in contact with these groups are adequately trained and aware of their responsibilities in this area.
* Supporting Heads of Service in dealing with allegations of abuse or lack of care by staff.
* Referring any information about individuals who may pose a risk to the DBS.

7.6 **All Employees** and particularly those encountering children and vulnerable adults are responsible for:

* Ensuring that they are familiar with and understand the policies and procedures relating to their work which brings them into contact with children and vulnerable adults either directly or indirectly and raise any concerns about their level of knowledge with their managers in order that this may be addressed.
* Treating all children and vulnerable adults with respect when they encounter them whilst carrying out their work.
* Reporting to their manager or the Safeguarding Lead any concerns they may have about abuse or a lack of care of children or vulnerable adults.

7.7 **The designated Safeguarding Lead has the responsibility to:**

* Provide advice and information relating to safeguarding concerns
* Receive and record information from employees, members, children, vulnerable adults or parents and carers who have safeguarding concerns.
* Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
* Ensure a formal referral to a statutory agency or the police has been made without delay and ensure the proper transfer of information relating to dealings with children and vulnerable adults, where necessary.
* Collate information from relevant services to inform a chronology for the purpose of a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review, or Safeguarding Adult Review.
* Ensure that recommendations from any reviews the council has been involved in are implemented.
* Ensure the councils’ safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and compliant with legislation and guidance.
* Ensure appropriate training is available for employees and members.
* Be responsible for ensuring any internal safeguarding allegations are reported to the Hampshire County Council Local Authority Designated Officer if the staff member is in a position of trust and in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.
* Liaise with the Community Safety Manager regarding Prevent as required.

7.8 The designated Safeguarding Lead should be aware of the local child and vulnerable adult protection networks, the role of the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and The Hampshire Safeguarding Adult Board and the existence of local safeguarding procedures.

It is essential for the designated Safeguarding Lead to have received training in child protection and safeguarding vulnerable adults.

# 8. Allegations Against Employees or Members

8.1 Where there is an allegation against employees or members concerning children or vulnerable adults in which it is alleged that an employee or member has:

* Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or vulnerable adult

* Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults.
* Behaved in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

The following shall apply:

8.2The Human Resources service will be responsible if the allegation concerns an employeeand the normal employment procedures would apply.

8.3If the allegation relates to a member, the council’s Monitoring Officer will be responsiblein accordance with the normal procedures relating to an allegation of a failure to comply with the Member Code of Conduct.

8.4In each case it shall be the responsibility of the Human Resources service or theMonitoring Officer, as appropriate, to make any required report to the Hampshire County Council Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for children or Designated Safeguarding Adult Officer for adults. Section 22 sets out further guidance regarding the reporting process.

# 9. Funding and Grants

9.1Where organisations and groups that work with children or vulnerable adults apply to thecouncil for grant assistance, the granting of funds will be subject to a safeguarding policy being in place by the recipient organisation checked on application by a self-declaration to this effect. Guidance for organisations or groups regarding adopting a safeguarding policy can be provided by the Safeguarding Lead if needed.

# 10. Hiring Facilities to Others

10.1Any hirer who provides activities for children must state this fact on the booking form andsign a self-declaration that they are aware of safeguarding procedures or have their own safeguarding policy in place.

# 11. Tendering and Contracting Out Services

11.1Any contractor or sub-contractors engaged by the council in areas where workers are likelyto encounter children or vulnerable adults, should have its own safeguarding policy in place or failing this, must comply with the terms of this policy.

11.2All new contracts let by the council which involves services for children and vulnerableadults will include appropriate reference to complying with the policy and that evidence is requested at point of tender and then subsequently checked at periodic intervals.

# 12. Out of Hours Working

12.1It is recognised that employees and members work outside of office hoursand therefore may have difficulties contacting the Safeguarding Lead. If there is an incident or allegations of abuse outside of office hours, this should be reported directly to the **Hants Direct Out of Hours (Children and Adults Services) Duty team on 0300 555** **1373**.

12.2The employee, member or volunteer should then complete the Safeguarding ChildrenConcern Form (Appendix A)or Adult Concern Form (Appendix B) and contact the Safeguarding Lead at the first opportunity.

12.3Any out of hours working undertaken by an employee should comply with lone working procedures (for individual teams).

# 13. Confidentiality

13.1EHDC will act in accordance with information sharing guidance and legislation.

13.2The legal principle that “the welfare of the child is paramount” means that theconsiderations of confidentiality that might apply to other situations within the district council should not be allowed to override the right of the child to be protected from harm. The same applies to vulnerable adults where there is an immediate risk of harm but wherever possible consent from the adult should be obtained before a referral is made unless doing so places the individual at further risk.

13.3Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for allconcerned both when an allegation is made and whilst it is being investigated. (See Whistle Blowing Policy).

# 14. Information Sharing and Record Keeping

14.1Ensure that any information shared is necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared and stored securely (marked confidential).

When sharing personal data there must be an identified lawful basis (under Data Protection), which is documented/ recorded, to share that data. Keep a record of the decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If it is decided to share, then record what is shared, with whom and for what purpose. Staff are not required to store safeguarding concern forms once this has been sent to the Safeguarding Lead.

# 15. Complaints Procedure

15.1It is important to maintain an open culture where employees, members, children, vulnerable adults, and parents/carers feel able to express concerns both about safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and concerns about issues of poor practice when dealing with children and vulnerable adults.

15.2 Employees and members can raise concerns about other employees or members by following the Whistle Blowing Policy or other appropriate procedure.

15.3 An easy to follow complaints procedure for members of the public including partners, and young people is available on the council’s website, or from the council offices.

# 16. Recruitment

16.1Through its recruitment procedures for all employees who work directlywith children or vulnerable adults, EHDC will:

* Check for convictions for criminal offences against children and vulnerable adults in accordance with current legislation.
* Explore each applicant’s experience of working or contact with children or

vulnerable adults prior to an appointment being made.

* + Obtain two references, one of which must be from a current or most recent employer. Qualifications and professional registration will also be verified prior to an appointment being made.
	+ Undertake any other pre-employment checks, for example confirmation of the applicant’s right to work in the UK.

# 17. Training

17.1EHDC recognises that it has a commitment to ensure that allemployees, members, and volunteers have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities when working with children and vulnerable adults. The council’s training process will help them to:

* Be able to recognise signs of abuse and what appropriate course of action should be taken in such circumstances.
* Understand the potential risks to themselves and ensure that good practice is adhered to at all time.
* Have an awareness of Prevent and the referral pathway to report concerns

17.2All employees who work directly or indirectly with children and vulnerable adultswill be required to have training in the above areas at a level commensurate to their role.

17.3Training for members will be delivered in accordance to need andrelevant guidance.

# 18. Safeguarding Children

18.1 **Recognising Child Abuse**

* Recognising child abuse is not easy and it is **not** the responsibility of employees, or members to decide whether abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk, they do however have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns.
* Whilst any child could be at risk of abuse, those with disabilities or who are in care (or leaving care) have an increased risk of vulnerability. Therefore, when working with these groups or their families, employees and members need to be mindful of this increased risk factor.

18.2 **Recognising What Child Abuse Is**

There are four main forms of child abuse**\***

**Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, and burning as well as giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs, or poison. Physical abuse as well as being a deliberate act can be caused by an omission or failure to act to protect.

**Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is a persistent lack of love and affection. A child may be constantly shouted at, threatened, or taunted. This can make the child nervous and withdrawn. Other forms of emotional abuse include excessive overprotection and unrealistic pressure to succeed. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of children although it may occur alone.

**Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing the child or young person to take part in sexual activities whether the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. Sexual abuse can involve penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. It may also involve non-contact activities such as showing pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. This includes children and young people up to the age of 18 who are victims of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

**Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and or psychological needs. These needs include, for example, adequate food and warm clothing and medical care. Children may be left alone unsupervised. Emotional neglect is when children are deprived of love and affection.

**Missing, Exploited & Trafficked (MET)**

Children or young people can be exploited for criminal and sexual purposes and this occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive for a sexual or criminal activity

1. in exchange for something the victim needs or wants
2. for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or
3. through violence or threats of violence.

The victim may have been exploited even if the activity appears consensual. This does always involve physical contact and can take place using technology.

Trafficking children relates to ‘the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by means of threat, use of force, coercion, abductions, fraud, deception or abuse of power for the purpose of exploitation’. For the person to be recognised as a victim of trafficking, these three elements must be proven:

* + Movement (including within the UK)
	+ Control, through harm/ threat of harm or fraud
	+ For exploitation

*(Working Together to Safeguard Children HM Gov 2018)*

18.2 **Indications that a child is being abused:**

* Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruises, cuts and burns particularly if situated on parts of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
* Injuries for which an explanation seems inconsistent.
* Fear of parents being approached about such injuries.
* Reluctance to get changed e.g. wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
* Flinching when touched or approached.
* A failure to thrive or grow
* Sudden speech disorders
* Difficulties in making friends
* The child is prevented from socialising.
* Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour.
* Fear of being left with a specific person.
* Sexually explicit behaviour.
* Sexual knowledge beyond their age and developmental level.
* A distrust of adults particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
* Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food.
* The child being dirty/smelly and unkempt.
* Loss of weight.
* Inappropriate dress for the conditions.
* Unexplained gifts/expensive hobbies/activities
* Access to illegal substances
* Missing/skipping school/home/events

18.3This list is by no means definitive and it is important to remember that manychildren will exhibit some of these indicators at some time and the presence of one or more should **not** be taken as proof that abuse is occurring.

18.4There may be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as a death in the family or thebirth of a new baby. It is crucial that this is only a process of observation and that at no point in time should an employee, or member feel that they should be actively investigating abuse or a potential abuser.

18.5The responsibility of the employee, or member is to ensure that if theyhave concerns about the welfare of a child, they must report it and must **never** assume that others will do so.

# 19. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

**19.1 What is abuse of vulnerable adults?**

**Physical**

Hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions. **Sexual**

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.

**Psychological**

Emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

**Financial or material**

Theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure (with wills), property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

**Neglect and acts of omission**

Ignoring medical or physical care needs, failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care, welfare benefits or educational services, with holding the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.

**Discriminatory**

Racism, sexism, or acts based on a person’s disability, age, or sexual orientation. It also includes other forms of harassment; slurs or similar treatment such as hate crime.

**Domestic abuse**

Psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse and so called ‘honour’ based violence.

**Organisational abuse**

Neglect and poor care practice within a care setting such as a hospital or care home or in relation to care provided in someone’s own home ranging from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be neglect or poor practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes, and practices within a care setting.

March 20

 **Modern slavery**

Encompassing slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive, and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude, and inhumane treatment.

**Self-Neglect**

Covers a wide range of behaviours including neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

# 20. Procedures for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

20.1These procedures seek to ensure that all employees, members, and volunteers have aclear understanding of their responsibilities when working with children and vulnerable adults.

20.2See the steps summarising the procedure for responding to suspicions of abuse againstchildren or vulnerable adults or other concerns relating to the protection of children and vulnerable adults (Appendix C).

20.3 The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Safeguarding Children Partnership and Children’s Trust [Thresholds Chart](https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Hampshire-IOW-Thresholds-Chart-July-2019-1.pdf) can be used by employees to support them when communicating concerns to Children’s Services:

20.4 In addition to this ‘[A Guide to Recognising Neglect in Children](https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/A-Guide-to-Recognising-Neglect-in-Children-Updated-October-2019.pdf)’ can be used if concerns specifically relate to neglect:

20.5 A [Community Partnership Information Form](https://www.safe4me.co.uk/portfolio/sharing-information/) can be used to share non urgent information with the Police. This includes when a crime has not been committed and a child/ adult is not at immediate risk:

20.6 If an employee disagrees with a decision taken by the Safeguarding Lead then they should raise their concerns with the Strategic Safeguarding Lead. If the disagreement is in relation to the outcome of a decision made by [Children’s Services](https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/4LSCB-Joint-Working-Protocol-for-the-Professional-Challenge-and-Resolution-of-Professional-Disagreement-May-2019.pdf), or [Adult Services](http://www.hampshiresab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Safeguarding-Adults-Escalation-Protocol.pdf) then their protocols should be followed to help resolve the disagreement:

1. **Responding to Allegations and Suspicions of Abuse to Children or** **Vulnerable Adults.**

21.1If a child or adult discloses abuse to you directly you must:

* Stay calm.
* Listen carefully.
* Find an appropriate, early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared. Do not promise to keep secrets.
* Allow the child/ adult to talk and at their own pace and in their own words.
* Ask questions for clarification only and always use open questions that cannot lead.
* Reassure the child/ adult that they have done the right thing in telling you.
* Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
* Record in writing what was said using the child’s/ adults’ own words as soon as possible. Note the date and time, any names mentioned and to whom the information was given. Ensure that this record is signed and dated.
* Relay this information as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Lead, your line manager or Head of Service.
* All electronic concern forms for Children’s or Adult Services should be saved and sent to safeguarding@easthants.gov.uk. Alternatively, reports can be made using the Safeguarding Child Concern Form, or Safeguarding Adult Concern Form which can be found on the staff [intranet](https://capitacouncilspartnership.sharepoint.com/sites/havantandeasthants/SitePages/Safeguarding.aspx?from=SendByEmail&e=FaqMcun-5kyHgqn8RkO3XA&at=9&CT=1619434181427&OR=OWA-NT&CID=2496c8b1-c488-3e46-fbd8-6e06667a0b22).

**Ref: Safeguarding Children Concern Form (Appendix A) and Safeguarding Adult Concern Form (Appendix B)**

21.2Remember that it is important that everyone at EHDC is aware thatthe person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is **not** responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is the task of the professional agencies following a referral to them.

**If you think a child or a vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, then always contact the Police on 999. Report your actions to your line manager and Safeguarding Lead.**

1. **Responding to Suspicions That an Employee, or Member May Be** **Abusing a Child or Vulnerable Adult or Not Following the Code of Conduct and Good Practice.**

22.1Any employee, or member who suspects that a colleague, or member may be abusingchildren/ vulnerable adults or in any way behaving inappropriately, should act on their suspicions. Action should also be taken if it is felt that colleagues are not following the codes of conduct set out in this document. This action will serve not only to protect children/ or vulnerable adults but also colleagues from false accusations.

* Write down the details of the incident following the guidelines in this policy.
* Pass this report to your manager at the earliest opportunity.
* The manager should then take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the child/ adult and of any other child/adult who may be at risk.
* The matter should then be discussed with the Monitoring Officer and if necessary, the Safeguarding Lead and HR, who will then consider whether the matter is an issue relating to poor practice or to child / adult abuse.
* If the matter relates to poor practice, procedures relating to misconduct should be followed. If the matter relates to child / adult abuse the matter should be referred to Children or Adult Services who may involve the Police, and the employee suspended pending the outcome of an internal investigation into the allegations.

22.2EHDC acknowledges that this is an extremely sensitive issue andassures all employees and persons working on its behalf that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith, reports a concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child or vulnerable adult.

# 23. Safeguarding Code of Conduct and Good Practice

23.1These guidelines are designed not only to protect children and vulnerable adults but alsoto protect employees, and members from situations where false allegations may occur.

23.2Employees and members must**:**

* Treat all children and vulnerable adults and their possessions with respect.
* Provide an example of good conduct they wish others to follow

* Ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children and vulnerable adults or that at least they are within the sight or hearing of others
* Respect the child/ vulnerable adult’s right to personal privacy and encourage them to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.
* Remember that someone else might misinterpret their actions, no matter how well intentioned.
* Be aware that physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted and be mindful of why, how, and where they make physical contact.
* Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues
* Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/ suspicions of abuse.
* Be identifiable and have their photo ID card on display
* Keep the child’s or vulnerable adult’s needs first.

23.3Employees and members must **not:**

* Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or vulnerable adults
* Make sexually suggestive comments, even in fun
* Make derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or vulnerable adults
* Jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts
* Exaggerate or trivialise child or vulnerable adult abuse issues
* Show favouritism to individuals
* Ask people to do things that are potentially dangerous, illegal, or unreasonable.
* Allow bullying
* Let allegations a child or vulnerable adult makes be ignored or go unrecorded
* Take children or vulnerable adults alone in a vehicle unless in an emergency or with parental consent.
* Take children/ vulnerable adults to their home.
* Meet up with children / vulnerable adults outside of their work with EHDC unless it is with the full consent and knowledge of the person’s parents / carers and their manager.

Never enter a house when a child is in there on their own unless the child is in danger.

 The points above relate to face to face contact, via telephone and email. The Social Media Policy and ICT Security Policy must also be followed.

# 24. Legislation /Guidance

* The Children Act 2004
* Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
* Information Sharing Advice for practitioners 2018
* The Care Act 2014
* The Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015
* Mental Capacity Act 2005

# 25. Useful Contacts and Sources of Information

**To report your concerns or to talk to a duty social worker regarding child protection call HantsDirect (Children’s Services)**

Use this link to complete the electronic [Inter Agency Referral Form](https://forms.hants.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-7e6115a7-b0ba-484d-991f-084c1248ac72/AF-Stage-52cf8e73-0daf-47d4-bb55-0fdad856d3e6/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en) for non-urgent concerns.

Or tel 0300 555 1384 (office hours for urgent concerns) or 0300 555 1373 (out of hours).

Professionals Line 01329 225379.

Or visit the [website](https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/safeguardingchildren/childprotection/reportingabuse) for further information.

A range of [toolkits](https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/toolkits/) to support employees when sharing concerns with Children’s Services are available through Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership including: Adopting a Family Approach, Abusive Head Trauma, Every Sleep Counts, Female Genital Mutilation, Neglect and Understanding Unidentified Adults.

HSCP also have a range of [procedures](https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/page/contents) which can be referred to for safeguarding children in specific circumstances, for example: disabled children, unborn babies, children who move across local authority borders, looked after children, fabricated induced illness and more.

**To report your concerns or to talk to a duty social worker regarding vulnerable adults’ call HantsDirect (Adult Services)**

Use this link to complete the electronic [Professional Referral Form](https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/contact/professional-referral) for non-urgent concerns.

Or tel 0300 555 1386 (office hours for urgent concerns) or 0300 555 1373 (out of hours).

Professionals Line 01329 225378.

Or visit the [website](https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/safeguarding) for further information.

[The 4LSAB Multi- Agency Policy, Process and Guidance](https://www.hampshiresab.org.uk/professionals-area/hampshire_4lsab_multiagency_safeguarding_adults_policy_guidance/) should be used to support responses to concerns regarding abuse or neglect.

**Prevent** referrals should be made using guidance and [forms](https://www.hants.gov.uk/community/prevent) from Hampshire County Council.

Modern Slavery referrals should be made using the [victim pathway](https://www.hampshiresab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Hampshire-Victim-Pathway.pdf).

**Employee Assistance Programme**

Should an employee feel they require support following their involvement with a safeguarding concern, information on the EHDC Health Assured- 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme can be found on the council’s intranet (under ‘Employee Information’). Tel: 0800 030 5182.

# Appendix A

**SAFEGUARDING CONCERN FORM**

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE (pre-birth- 18th birthday or up to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities)**

This form should be completed as fully and factually as possible. Take care to highlight anything which is recorded and only opinion, or hearsay.

Be careful not to investigate or question the child, or young person unnecessarily.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **About you** |  |
| Name |  |
| Job role |  |
| Service or department |  |
| Work address |  |
| Contact telephone number |  |
| Email |  |
|  |  |
| **Consent to sharing information** |  |
| Has the child’s parent(s) / carer(s) consent been gained for this referral? | Please delete as appropriateConsent givenConsent refusedConsent not requested |
| Give further information about the consentFor example:1. Verbal consent given by mother, and not father.2. Consent requested of mother on [date] and refused3. Consent not requested as this may pose a risk to the child /parent |  |
|  |  |
| **About the children** |  |
| First and last name |  |
| AKA/ previous names (optional) |  |
| Gender at birth |  |
| Identified gender (if different) optional |  |
| Date of birth/ estimated delivery date |  |
| Ethnicity |  |
| Does the child or family need any support with communication? | Please delete as appropriateYesNo |
| Child’s address |  |
| Does the child have any siblings? Or are you aware of any other children living at the child's home address? | Please delete as appropriateYesNoUnknown |
|  |  |
| **Adults in the child’s life** |  |
| Select all significant adults known to you | Please delete as appropriateMotherFatherOther adult living at the same address as the childOther adult living elsewhereNone known |
|  |  |
| **Describe the situation you are worried about** |  |
| What has happened to concern you?Include as much detail as possible, including:what you have observedwhat you have been told (and by who)what you have not seen (e.g. missed appointments, non-attendance at school, not seen alone)what you have not been told (e.g. the child is unable to communicate due to age / another reason)when (e.g. times and dates)wider context that suggests risk. |  |
| Describe what is currently in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child(ren) you are concerned for.Include as much detail as possible, including:what you and other professionals have done/are doingwhat support from other family/the community is in place when/ how frequently/ for how long? |  |
| If known, please provide details of other agencies involved with the family. Including:agencycontact detailsnames |  |
| Describe the views of the family on what concerns you.For example, have the family requested support? Have they denied that an incident that concerns you took place? If not known, please enter 'Not known'. |  |
| Date and time of concern |  |
|  |  |
| **To be completed by Safeguarding Lead** |  |
| Actions agreed |  |
| If a referral was not made detail the reasons |  |
| Future actions |  |
| Name |  |
| Signature |  |
| Job Role |  |
| Date |  |

**Email to:** **safeguarding@easthants.gov.uk** **and mark as ‘confidential.’**

**Remember to always maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.**

NB This form should be kept by the relevant Safeguarding Lead and the information it contains should be passed to the relevant agency as soon as possible.

**Appendix B**

**SAFEGUARDING CONCERN FORM**

**Adult (aged 18 and over)**

This form should be completed as fully and factually as possible. Take care to highlight anything which is recorded and only opinion, or hearsay

Be careful not to investigate or question the adult unnecessarily.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **About you** |  |
| Name |  |
| Job role |  |
| Service or department |  |
| Work address |  |
| Contact telephone number |  |
| Email |  |
|  |  |
| **Consent to sharing information** |  |
| Has the adult’s consent been gained? | Please delete as appropriateYesNo |
| Is the individual over 65? | Please delete as appropriateOver 65Under 65 |
| **About the adult** |  |
| First and last name |  |
| Address |  |
| Contact telephone number |  |
| Email address |  |
| Date of birth |  |
| Their GP surgery name (if known) |  |
| Their GP address (if known) |  |
| **Questions about concern****What best describes the reason for your concern?** | Select one or more of the following options:Physical abuseDomestic violence or abuseSexual abusePsychological or emotional abuseFinancial or material abuseModern slaveryDiscriminatory abuseOrganisational or institutional abuseNeglect or act of omission (e.g. medication error)Self-neglect (including hoarding) |
| Please describe what happened including when, where, who and has it happened before? |  |
| Is the concern ongoing | Please delete as appropriateYesNo |
| Has anything been put in place to stop the incident/ concern happening again? |  |
| Do you know what the person you are concerned about wants to happen? |  |
| Who else have you reported this to? | Please delete as appropriateCQCPoliceTrading StandardsHealth ServicesFire & RescueFamily |
| Date and time of concern |  |
|  |  |
| **To be completed by Safeguarding Lead** |  |
| Actions agreed |  |
| If a referral was not made detail the reasons |  |
| Future actions |  |
| Name |  |
| Signature |  |
| Job Role |  |
| Date |  |

**Email to:** **safeguarding@easthants.gov.uk** **and mark as ‘confidential.’**

**Remember to always maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.**

NB This form should be kept by the relevant Safeguarding Lead and the information it contains should be passed to the relevant agency as soon as possible.

# Appendix C

**Safeguarding Procedure**

**Step One –Identifying a Concern**

* You are concerned a child, or adult is at risk, or has been abused because:
* You have seen something
* A child, or adult says they have been abused, or wishes to harm themselves e.g. suicide
* Somebody else has told you they are concerned
* An adult has disclosed they are abusing a child, or adult at risk
* There has been an allegation against a member of staff

**Step Two –Your Responsibility Regarding Sharing Information**

* Talk to your line manager and agree whether information should be shared with Children’s, or Adult Services. If your line manager is not available, or you are unsure, you can seek advice from the Safeguarding Lead, or deputy. If your line manager and Safeguarding Lead are both unavailable, refer your concern straight to Children’s, or Adult Services by the end of your working day.
* An [Inter-Agency Referral Form](https://forms.hants.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-7e6115a7-b0ba-484d-991f-084c1248ac72/AF-Stage-52cf8e73-0daf-47d4-bb55-0fdad856d3e6/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en) (IARF) can be completed regarding a child (if they are not in immediate danger), otherwise, telephone: 0300 555 1384. You will be prompted to download a copy of the form after you have submitted it. Ensure the form is downloaded, saved, and sent to the relevant Safeguarding Lead.
* Non urgent concerns regarding adults should be shared with Adult Services using their [Professional Referral Form](https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/contact/professional-referral) (PRF). Or telephone: 0300 555 1386. You will be prompted to print the form before you submit, use the dropdown menu next to ‘Destination’ to select ‘Save as PDF,’ choose where to save the file, then send to safeguarding@easthants.gov.uk
* Call 101 if a child, or adult is in danger, or 999 if it is an emergency. 999 should also be called if a crime may have or has been committed.

**Step Three – Recording**

* The [Safeguarding Concern Form](https://capitacouncilspartnership.sharepoint.com/sites/havantandeasthants/SitePages/Safeguarding.aspx?from=SendByEmail&e=FaqMcun-5kyHgqn8RkO3XA&at=9&CT=1619434181427&OR=OWA-NT&CID=2496c8b1-c488-3e46-fbd8-6e06667a0b22) should be completed for all concerns where an IAFR or PRF was not completed, submitted and sent to the Safeguarding Lead.
* Include who was spoken to, along with any decisions, or actions agreed.
* Send to safeguarding@easthants.gov.uk

**Notes**

* In the cases of concern about a member of staff, you should talk to your line manager in the first instance and Safeguarding Lead. If your concern is about an elected member, then you should speak to the Monitoring Officer.
* If the employee is in a position of trust, then the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer), or the DASM (Designated Adult Safeguarding Manager) will co-ordinate the next steps for any staff complaints or allegations. If the adult is not in a position of trust, because they do not work directly with children, then the Disciplinary Procedure applies
* Anyone can “whistle blow” directly to the police or social services if they feel their concerns will not be managed appropriately by the council.
* EVERYONE should observe confidentiality with colleagues, family, and friends.