



Document Name	Unique Id	Version	Effective Date	Review Date	Summary of significant changes
Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Adults	SPPrA	1	September 2016	September 2017	Updated and approved by Lynn Palfrey
Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Adults	SPPrA	2	October 2017	October 2018	Updated to include definitions and signs of abuse
Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Adults	SPPrA	3	January 2019	January 2020	Updated with changes regarding the Weekends Away
Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Adults	SPPrA	3	January 2020	January 2021	Currently under review by ES following safeguarding training
Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Adults	SPPrA	4	July 2020	July 2021	Reviewed by Shaun Polley. Updates to: terminology and definitions, procedures, six principles



## Safeguarding Policy and Procedure (Adult)

### Purpose and Scope of Policy

Me2 Club aims to provide the safest possible environment for the adults we work with. We are committed to safeguarding in all areas. All adults have a right to protection, and the needs of adults with additional needs and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be considered. In previous policies they may be considered as a 'vulnerable adult or person'. This policy will define how Me2 Club will support and protect adults at risk of harm.

An adult might be considered at risk if they are aged 18 years or over and:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local council is meeting any of those needs: and;
- Is experiencing, or at risk of abuse and 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 and neglect.

An adult at risk may be a person who:

- Is elderly and frail due to ill health
- Has a learning disability
- Has a physical disability and/or sensory impairment
- Has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder
- Has a long-term illness and/or condition
- Misuses substances including alcohol
- Is unable to make their own decisions and is in need of care and support
- Is a young adult over the age of 18, who has care and support needs and is 'in transition' from childrens' to adults' services
- Is a carer (looking after another person with care and support needs)

This is not an exhaustive list; other people might also be considered to be adults at risk of harm.

Me2 Club also has a child safeguarding policy for those under the age of 18.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults is defined as:

- Protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect;
- Preventing impairment of adult's health or development;
- Ensuring adults are living in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
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Adult protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect adults who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of adults at risk so that the need for action to protect them from harm is reduced.

Acts to protect vulnerable adults include:

**The Care Act 2014** sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

**The Care Standards Act 2000** aims to ensure that no one is allowed to work in the care sector if they have ever abused, neglected or otherwise harmed adults in their care or placed them at risk.



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The **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006** was passed to help avoid harm, or risk of harm, by preventing people who are deemed unsuitable to work with children and adults at risk from gaining access to them through their work. The Independent Safeguarding Authority was established as a result of this Act.

### Six Key Principles:

- Empowerment: People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent.
- Prevention: It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- Proportionality: The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Protection: Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- Partnership: Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- Accountability: Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

These six principles should inform the ways in which professionals and staff work with adults.

### Responsibilities of Me2 Club

Me2 Club is committed to ensuring that in all situations:

- The welfare of adults at risk is paramount;
- All adults at risk, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- Take all reasonable, practical steps to protect adults at risk from abuse;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and/or poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- All staff and volunteers working for Me2 Club have a responsibility to report concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Officer

### Designated Safeguarding Officers

The Me2 Club Chief Executive is the Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer. A member of the board of trustees will have a strategic responsibility for safeguarding practice across the organisation and will act as Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer in the absence of the Chief Executive in operational matters. Both will be trained to Designated Safeguarding Officer level.

Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer:

Shaun Polley, Chief Executive [shaun@me2club.org.uk](mailto:shaun@me2club.org.uk) or 07821 858852

Trustee strategic lead for safeguarding and Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer:

Sarah Hilling, [sarah@me2club.org.uk](mailto:sarah@me2club.org.uk) or 07789 116774

### Safer Recruitment Practice

Safer Recruitment practice is an important part of an organisations approach to creating a safe environment for children and young people. Me2 Club operates a Safer Recruitment process which is designed to:

- Deter applications from those that are unsuitable to work with children and young people
- Reject unsuitable applicants through the recruitment process
- Attract the best possible candidates to vacant posts

Our safer recruitment practice is used in staff and volunteer appointments.



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Staff: all staff are interviewed, two professional references are taken up and an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check undertaken. Due to the nature of the work these posts are exempt from the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014. DBS checks are carried out every 3 years for all staff, Trustees and volunteers.

New Me2 Club staff members should have the opportunity to shadow the Chief Executive and existing staff members to learn best practice in this area.

Volunteers (Incl.Trustees): all volunteers are interviewed and two character references are taken up along with an enhanced DBS check. Me2 Club has the right to refuse a volunteers' involvement if it is felt they are not an appropriate match for our young people.

Staff and volunteers do not begin their role until all required employment checks including obtaining satisfactory references and unblemished DBS returns. In the event of a blemished DBS, the information contained will be reviewed by the Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer on the suitability of the appointment. The outcomes of this review could be:

- Not making the appointment on grounds of suitability to work with children or adults
- Continuing with the appointment following a risk assessment and plan

### Training

Staff: all delivery staff attend training for Adult Safeguarding up to Level 1 as soon as possible and within 2 months of starting. In addition, the Me2 Club Chief Executive will also attend a Safer Recruitment and Designated Persons Training course at the first opportunity as will the designated Trustee lead.

Trustees: all Trustees must attend Safeguarding awareness training at the first opportunity (and within 6 months) of becoming a member. Safeguarding training may be done through their place of work if appropriate and proof of training shown to the Chief Executive. The Deputy Lead Officer will attend Designated Persons Training at the first opportunity. If Trustees have not attended Safeguarding training within 12 months they may be asked to leave the Board.

Volunteers: all volunteers attend Safeguarding Awareness training as part of their induction training. Me2 Club's Safeguarding Policy and volunteer procedures are explained as part of this training.

All staff, volunteers and trustees must complete an annual refresher safeguarding awareness training course which can be delivered internally by Designated Officers.

### Definitions of Adult Abuse

*Adult abuse is any avoidable act, or avoidable failure to act, which adversely affects the physical, mental, or emotional well-being of an adult at risk.*

Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse/Child Sexual Exploitation, Emotional/Psychological Abuse and Neglect are all categories of harm. More information on types of abuse is contained in Appendix 1.



## Safeguarding Policy and Procedure (Adult)

### Safeguarding Procedures

Generally, concerns will arise in one of three ways:

1. Direct allegations of abuse or neglect
2. Observations or information about adults which might suggest they are experiencing abuse or neglect
3. More general adult care concerns

If a Me2 Club Volunteer is made aware of a safeguarding concern by a beneficiary or is worried about the welfare of an adult, their only duty is to pass that information on to:

- A Me2 Club Activities and Volunteers Coordinator and/or;
- Me2 Club Chief Executive

#### **1. Direct allegations of abuse or neglect**

If an adult makes a direct disclosure to a staff member, the staff member should:

- Tell the adult they believe them and reassure them that they will not get into trouble for being honest
- Tell the adult that they have done the right thing in sharing the information and that in order to keep them safe they may have to share this with another professional
- The member of staff should only ask open questions e.g.: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? These questions should be minimal and only asked out of necessity and to clarify the situation. Care must be given to avoid asking leading questions.
- The member of staff should let the adult speak freely
- The member of staff will not make assumptions and should not make the adult feel guilty or embarrassed
- The member of staff will write down, as soon as possible, the adult's account using their language/words
- The member of staff will consult with a Designated Lead Officer to develop an appropriate safeguarding response
- The member of staff will inform the adult of the actions they will take, including who they will share the information with
- If necessary, the member of staff should contact the Duty Social Services Team or Out of Hours Emergency Team. They will take advice from Social Services regarding what to do next
- The member of staff will treat this information as confidential and will only share it with authorised personnel

#### **2. Observations or information about adults which might suggest they are experiencing abuse or neglect**

- A volunteer may identify concerns during an activity. In this instance they should speak to the Activity Provider who may contact Social Services
- The volunteer must speak to a member of Me2 Club staff so a formal record on a Me2 Club incident form can be made
- If a member of staff witnesses or observes or is made aware of information that might suggest an adult is experiencing harm, abuse or neglect, they should consult with a designated safeguarding officer



## Safeguarding Policy and Procedure (Adult)

### General vulnerable adult care concerns

Where there are low levels of concerns that an adult at risk is not having their physical or emotional needs met to a satisfactory standard, the staff member will need to discuss their needs in the first instance with a Designated Lead Officer,

### Sharing information

Me2 Club has the responsibility to share information with the local authority's (LA's) adult social care officers/ Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) when we have reasonable cause to suspect that an adult may be suffering or may be at risk of significant harm. While, in general, we should first discuss any concerns with the adult at risk and work with them to develop an appropriate safeguarding response, we may need to share information without their consent in order to keep them safe.

### Allegations against Volunteers, Committee members or Staff Members

If an allegation is made against a volunteer or staff member by the Activity Provider or parent this should immediately be notified to the Me2 Club Chief Executive, who will discuss a plan of action with the Trustees. If the allegation is against the Me2 Club Chief Executive, it should be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Officer on the Committee.

The Me2 Club Chief Executive will ask the person raising the concern if they have reported their concerns to Social Services. If not, the Me2 Club Chief Executive may advise them to do so. The Me2 Club Chief Executive will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The Chief Executive will carry out actions proportionate to the situation and concerns raised in order to resolve the concern and ensure that those at risk are safeguarded effectively.

### Additional Policies

In addition to Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Me2 Club has the following in policies in place to ensure the safest environment possible for beneficiaries:

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Confidentiality Policies (Staff, Trustees and Volunteers)
- Complaints Policy
- Social Media Policy
- DBS Policy
- Discipline Policy
- Grievance Policy

### Concerns Regarding a Vulnerable Adult's Wellbeing

Volunteers - volunteers are instructed that they must tell a Me2 Club staff member if they have any concerns regarding a adult at risk's wellbeing or safety and an incident form must also be completed, where necessary.

Staff - any concerns/information which may impact on an adult at risk's wellbeing (whether passed on by a volunteer or a staff member's) must be forwarded to a Designated Officer as soon as possible. To support staff in emergency situations where there is a need to immediately notify a designated safeguarding officer staff will be made aware of the appropriate numbers to use.

Lead Professional;s - If Me2 Club are aware that an adult has a named Social Worker/professional, concerns will be passed to them - initially by phone where possible, and followed by email. Completed incident forms will be shared, where appropriate.



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The designated lead will be the main contact for any ongoing adult protection procedures, liaising with the volunteer/staff member as necessary. The designated lead will attend multi-agency meetings reviews if appropriate.

The Chief Executive will provide monitoring information in relation to safeguarding incidents to the board. Any safeguarding incidents where there is an organisational failure to safeguard an individual or an incident that would constitute a critical incident will be reported to the board immediately.

### **Staff targeted by perpetrators to gain access to beneficiaries**

Me2 Club recognises that perpetrators may specifically target staff or volunteers of Me2 Club in an attempt to groom and exploit them in order to gain access our beneficiaries. In an event of this nature, the Chief Executive should be informed immediately so that an appropriate safeguarding response can be implemented and the member of staff provided with support. This is covered in further detail in Me2 Club's Whistle Blowing Policy.

### **Allegations against Volunteers, Committee members or Staff Members**

If an allegation is made against a volunteer or staff member by the Activity Provider or parent this should immediately be notified to the Me2 Club Chief Executive, who will discuss a plan of action with the Trustees. If the allegation is against the Me2 Club Chief Executive, it should be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Officer on the Committee.

The Me2 Club Chief Executive will ask the person raising the concern if they have reported their concerns to Social Services. If not, the Me2 Club Chief Executive may advise them to do so. The Me2 Club Chief Executive will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The Chief Executive will carry out actions proportionate to the situation and concerns raised in order to resolve the concern and ensure that those at risk are safeguarded effectively.

### **Safer Practice**

Me2 Club works to the following guidelines to promote safeguarding:

- Volunteers are instructed to avoid being 1-1 with their young adult in isolation at all times
- Where it is assessed that a young adults support needs create a higher safeguarding risk volunteers will be matched to support the young adult
- Volunteers are given guidance around safe personal care for low level needs (e.g. being in earshot of others/asking activity leader for support)
- On Weekends Away, room sharing is always the same gender. Under 18's and Over 18's will be in separate bedrooms, this applies to Me2 Club young adults and volunteers
- Me2 Club young adults will not share a bedroom with volunteers or staff
- A risk assessment will be undertaken each Weekend Away and if the risk is high of a young adult becoming anxious at night, 2 waking night staff will be employed
- All contact with Me2 Club members must be age appropriate, situation appropriate and socially appropriate
- All volunteers carry ID cards, with staff contact details as well as safeguarding emergency numbers listed



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If you are concerned about the safety or welfare of an adult at risk contact:

Area	Team	Contact Details
Wokingham	Adult Safeguarding	0118 974 6371
Wokingham	Out of Hours	01344 786 543
Wokingham	LADO	<a href="mailto:lado@wokingham.gov.uk">lado@wokingham.gov.uk</a>
Reading	Adult Safeguarding	0118 937 3747
Reading	Out of Hours	01344 786 543
Reading	LADO	<a href="mailto:lado@reading.gov.uk">lado@reading.gov.uk</a>
Thames Valley Police		101 or 0845 8505 505

### References and further information

This policy was written using material from the following sources. These sources should be checked for updates when this policy is reviewed:

- <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>
- <http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/>
- <http://www.education.gov.uk/>
- <http://www.wokinghamlscb.org.uk>
- <http://www.sabberkshirewest.co.uk/>
- *HM Government: What to do if you're worried a vulnerable adult is being abused*
- Introduction to Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults (Powerpoint)
- *An introduction to safeguarding vulnerable adults* (Wokingham Borough Council)



## Safeguarding Policy and Procedure (Adult)

### Appendix 1

**Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm. This list is not exhaustive. Physical harm may be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in an adult at risk.

**Sexual Abuse/Vulnerable Adult Sexual Exploitation:** Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a adult at risk to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the adult is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving an adult at risk in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging adults at risk to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming an adult at risk in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Adults at risk may be tricked into believing that they are in a loving consensual relationship, they might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other adults at risk.

**Emotional/Psychological Abuse:** Emotional/psychological abuse is the persistent ill-treatment of an adult at risk such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to them they are worthless, inadequate, unloved or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Abusers may also impose an age or developmentally inappropriate expectation and may bully them which causes them to feel frightened.

**Neglect:** Neglect is the persistent failure to meet an adult at risk's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect an adult at risk from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, their basic emotional needs.

**Grooming:** Grooming is the deliberate actions taken by an adult to form a trusting relationship with an adult at risk, with the intent to later having sexual contact (either with themselves or other people). This involves psychological manipulation in the form of positive reinforcement, activities that are typically legal but which lead to sexual contact. This is done to gain their trust as well as the trust of those responsible for their well-being.

Additionally, our own staff may be befriended to assist in the grooming of a vulnerable adult. This consists of being befriended by others through the Internet e.g.: Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, using messaging services or at parties through friends or social groups.

**Cyber-Bullying Abuse:** Cyber-bullying abuse is the use of information and communication technology, particularly mobile phones and the Internet, deliberately to upset someone else. "Upsetting" someone can take a variety of forms. It can involve threatening, distressing or humiliating a target, and, as such, encompasses a wide range of behaviours.



## Safeguarding Policy and Procedure (Adult)

**Honour-Based Violence:** Honour based violence is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community. It is often linked to family members or acquaintances who mistakenly believe someone has brought shame to their family. For example, honour based violence might be committed against people who:

- Become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion;
- Want to get out of an arranged marriage;
- Want to get out of a forced marriage;
- Wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture.

Women and girls are the most common victims of honour based violence; however it can also affect men and boys. Crimes of 'honour' might include:

- Domestic abuse;
- Threats of violence;
- Sexual or psychological abuse;
- Forced marriage;
- Being held against your will or taken somewhere you don't want to go;
- Assault.

**Radicalisation:** Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. During that process, it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being drawn into terrorist-related activity.