

Safeguarding Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy statement is to describe the aims and reasons for our safeguarding policies and procedures. It applies to anyone working on behalf of Autism Unlimited including trustees, employees, volunteers, sessional workers, students and adults we support.

We believe that:

- Children, young people and adults should never experience abuse of any kind.
- We are committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution.
- We acknowledge that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and is committed to prevent abuse and neglect through safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people and adults involved.
- Actions taken by Autism Unlimited will be consistent with the principles of safeguarding children, young people and adults, ensuring that any action taken is prompt, proportionate and that it includes and respects the voice of the adult concerned.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of children, young people and adults is paramount in all the work we do, and in all decisions we take
- Everyone, regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation has an equal right to protection from harm or abuse
- Some vulnerabilities are hidden and include past experiences, level of dependency, ability to communicate, or other issues
- Working in partnership with our networks is essential to promote welfare
- There is a legal framework within which we need to work to safeguard adults who have needs for care and support and for protecting those who are unable to take action to protect themselves and will act in accordance with the relevant safeguarding adult legislation and with local statutory safeguarding procedures.
- Health, well-being, ability, disability and need for care and support can affect a person's resilience. We recognise that some people experience barriers, for example, to communication in raising concerns or seeking help. We recognise that these factors can vary at different points in people's lives.

We will seek to keep people safe by:

- Valuing, listening and respecting the children and adults we support
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead and Lead Governor for Children and Young People and a Lead Trustee for Adult Services, adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct
- Developing and implementing effective online safety and related procedures
- Providing effective management and supervision for team members and volunteers, as well as support, training and quality assurance measure
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely
- Recording, storing and using information professionally and securely in line with data protection legislation
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with the people we support via leaflets, posters and discussions
- Ensuring that safeguarding is a priority item on each meeting agenda
- Making sure that children and people, young adults and people we support know where to go for help if they have a concern
- Using our safeguarding and child protection processes to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know
- Using our safeguarding procedures to manage any allegations appropriately
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring we adhere to our policy and process to help us deal effectively with bullying if it arises
- Assuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Building a safeguarding culture where colleagues, volunteers, children, young adults and people we support treat each other with respect and are comfortable sharing concern.

The legislative background

Our policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation and guidance which seeks to protect children and adults in England. This statement should be read alongside our charity policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents as follows:

- our Safeguarding Adults policy, 2022
- our Safeguarding Children policy, 2021
- our Whistleblowing policy, 2021
- The Charity Commission Strategy for dealing with safeguarding issues in charities, 2017
- The Care Quality Commission (CQC) Regulations for service providers and managers; Regulation 13: Safeguarding service users from abuse and improper treatment
- The Care Act (2014)
- The Health & Social Care Act (2015)
- The Mental Health Acts (1983 & 2007)
- The Mental Capacity Act (2005)
- Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019: Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)
- The Serious Crime Act (2015) The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2019)
- The Modern Slavery Act (2015)
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (Liberty Protection Safeguards – MCA Amendment Bill)(2018)
- The Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- The Children Act (1989) & (2004) including Section 11, as outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)
- Department for Education Governance handbook for academies, multi-academy trusts and maintained schools (2017)

Key People in the organisation are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Charity - Liz Rowe

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Designated Child Protection Lead - Anna Hewitt

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Portfield School, Governor Safeguarding Lead - Graham Whitehead

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Trustee Safeguarding Lead - Malcolm Farrell

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This policy statement was last reviewed in May 2022.