



Safeguarding Policy

(applies to the protection of children, young people and adults at risk)

Policy statement and policy objectives

As a social landlord, we have a responsibility to keep our customers safe from harm. There are a number of routes through which concerns raised in relation to our customers will be most appropriately handled, including via health and safety procedures, tenancy management / enforcement and the provision of tailored support to vulnerable people.

Our safeguarding policy and supporting procedures/guidance fit within this overall responsibility. They relate specifically to adults or children who are being abused or neglected by others, or who are at risk of being abused or neglected by others.

We believe that living a life that is free from harm and abuse is a fundamental right of every person. We recognise too that safeguarding those at risk of abuse is everyone's responsibility. Across the organisation, we can all play a part in preventing, being alert to and responding appropriately to abuse and/or neglect.

Specifically, we aim to:

- raise awareness about the abuse and/or neglect of children, young people and adults at risk
- develop a culture that does not tolerate such abuse and which encourages people to raise concerns
- prevent abuse from happening wherever possible
- respond promptly and proportionately where abuse does happen, to make the necessary referrals and engage the appropriate authorities, to stop the abuse continuing and to ensure the person harmed receives effective support.

Key policy principles

Our policy and supporting procedures are based on the six key principles which underpin safeguarding work¹:

Prevention – it is always preferable 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

Empowerment – people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent

Partnership – local solutions through services working with communities, who can have a key part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting abuse and neglect

Accountability – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

We recognise:

- safeguarding is a multi-agency approach which depends upon effective joint working. We recognise the lead responsibility of local authorities in coordinating safeguarding work, and our own role in alerting children's / adult's services and the police of any concerns regarding safety. Any suspected or actual crime will be referred to the police

¹ *Care and Support Statutory Guidance* (October 2014, updated 2016), Department of Health

- that appropriate information sharing between organisations is essential to safeguard people at risk and we will act in accordance with agreed inter-agency information sharing protocols. Where possible, we will seek a person's consent to share information, however we cannot guarantee full confidentiality when our responsibility to safeguard adults or children at risk, or the public interest, is greater than our responsibility to an individual
- our responsibility to be vigilant regarding the welfare of children and adults at risk and to train staff to recognise the signs of abuse and/or neglect
- that abuse may be committed by a member of staff, agent or by others who are in a trusting relationship with a vulnerable person
- our obligation to ensure we only recruit and employ staff working with children, young people and adults at risk who are competent and safe to do so. We will undertake the necessary DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) checks and will share information on staff found to be unsuitable to work with people at risk, by referring their details to the DBS. We will ensure via our procurement processes that our contractors and sub-contractors also comply with these requirements
- the need to ensure that all our staff are confident and fully equipped to respond to concerns of abuse. This will be achieved by training that is targeted appropriately to specific roles, and through clear procedural guidance and supporting information
- the need to ensure that contractors and sub-contractors have an effective safeguarding policy in place and, where not, that they are willing to work in accordance with our policy and processes
- that good record keeping (clear, concise, factual and accurate) is essential in safeguarding, enabling an appropriate response to concerns. It can also be key to preventing abuse as it can provide indicators of particular risks or vulnerabilities
- the importance of monitoring all reports of suspected or known abuse, their management and resolution. Our Duty of Care reporting system enables the recording and tracking of all concerns raised in relation to our customers, including safeguarding concerns. The system assists managers to monitor cases in their areas, as well as enabling the central review of cases in order to identify any learning points for the organisation in terms of policy and practice. Following serious cases, an internal review will be held with the same aim
- that anyone raising a safeguarding concern in good faith should always be listened to, believed and assured that we will act on their concern
- the value in promoting safeguarding so that customers can safeguard themselves. We recognise the majority of our customers have the capacity to keep themselves safe and to make informed choices and decisions. We will not assume someone is vulnerable to abuse (e.g. because of a disability). However, we will act to support customers and help them to seek protection from abuse, in the light of particular concerns and in response to an individual's particular needs
- the importance of operating a child / victim-centred approach, which treats people with dignity, respect and without prejudice. We will respect the rights of the person causing harm, as far as is possible
- our responsibility to ensure, where a customer or potential customer is a known risk to others, that a risk assessment is undertaken regarding the appropriateness of any proposed letting and to agree how risks will be managed. We will work in partnership with the relevant Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) or Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) in this respect (see definitions below).

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| <p>Scope</p> | <p>This Safeguarding Policy is an over-arching policy, applying across our business. It is important that all staff, managers, directors, board members and involved customers are aware that safeguarding is ‘everyone’s responsibility’ and that we all have a responsibility to act on concerns of abuse or neglect. Safeguarding is not restricted to staff working in support, care or children’s services.</p> <p>This policy applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to the protection of children, young people and adults at risk of abuse • across all tenures • to staff, contractors, sub-contractors and agents working for Paradigm. |
| <p>Legal and regulatory framework</p> | <p>The following legislation and guidance applies:</p> <p>Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998) – places a duty on everyone to report something that leaves someone at risk.</p> <p>Mental Capacity Act (2005) – the Mental Capacity Act (2005), and supporting Code of Practice (2016), provide a framework to empower and protect people who may lack capacity to make decisions for themselves.</p> <p>Protection of Freedoms Act (2012) – this Act established the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) by merging the functions previously carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). The primary aim of the DBS is to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. Further guidance is available at: https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check</p> <p>Data Protection Act (1998, as amended) – governs the protection of personal data. It is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about a person is shared appropriately.</p> <p>Human Rights Act (1998) - includes a duty on public bodies to intervene proportionately to protect the rights of citizens.</p> <p>The Care Act 2014 – introduces a legal framework for adult safeguarding for the first time. Since April 2015, each local authority has been required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make enquiries, or ensure others do so, if it believes an adult is subject to, or at risk of, abuse or neglect. An enquiry should establish whether any action needs to be taken to stop or prevent abuse or neglect, and if so, by whom • set up a Safeguarding Adults Board with core membership from the local authority, the Police and the NHS and the power to include other relevant bodies • arrange, where appropriate, for an independent advocate to represent and support an adult who is the subject of a safeguarding enquiry or Safeguarding Adult Review where the adult has ‘substantial difficulty’ in being involved in the process and where there is no other appropriate adult to help them • co-operate with each of its relevant partners in order to protect adults experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, including the provision of preventative services. <p>Care & Support Statutory Guidance (updated 2016) – sets out how the provisions of the Care Act should be implemented. It replaces ‘No Secrets’, the previous point of reference for adult safeguarding practice. The Guidance is clear that a wide range of organisations, including housing organisations, should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have clear operational policies and procedures in place for adult safeguarding • ensure their staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ are familiar with the six principles underpinning adult safeguarding ➢ are trained in recognising the symptoms of abuse / neglect |

- are vigilant and able to respond to adult safeguarding concerns, including where to go locally to get help and advice
- understand the need for clear and accurate record keeping
- stress the need for preventing abuse and neglect wherever possible
- support the local authority in its responsibility to carry out enquiries e.g. by providing relevant information. Although the local authority is the lead agency for making enquiries, it may also require other organisations to undertake them
- have a senior manager taking a lead role in organisational and inter-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Children Act (1989 and 2004) – legislation regarding the safeguarding of children. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations, including housing providers, to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (updated 2015) - sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the 1989 & 2004 Acts. It provides a national framework within which agencies and professionals at local level – individually and jointly – draw up and agree on their own ways of working together.

Safeguarding Children & Young People from Sexual Exploitation - supplementary guidance to 'Working Together', which sets out an inter-agency approach. It has a dual aim of helping to protect children and young people and encouraging the taking of a proactive approach to the prosecution of offenders.

Multi-Agency Policies and Procedures

Each Safeguarding Board is required to develop a multi-agency policy and procedure, providing the local framework for partner organisations to work together, enabling a consistent approach when responding to safeguarding concerns. Procedures and terminology may vary between local authority areas, and staff must familiarise themselves with the policy and processes in place in their particular area.

Quality Assessment Framework in Supported Housing

The Quality Assessment Framework (QAF), the standard tool used in the delivery, monitoring and continuous improvement of Supporting People contracts, contains clear requirements and quality standards in relation to safeguarding (Section C1.3: Safeguarding & Protection from Abuse). The overall intended outcome of objective C1.3 is that there is a commitment to safeguarding the welfare of adults and children using or visiting services and to working in partnership to protect vulnerable groups from abuse. It consists of five standards:

- there are robust policies and procedures for safeguarding and protecting adults and children. These should be less than three years old and in accordance with current legislation
- staff are aware of policies and procedures and their practice both safeguards clients and children and promotes understanding of abuse
- staff are made aware of and understand their professional boundaries and their practice reflects this
- customers understand what abuse is and know how to report concerns
- the service is committed to participating in a multi-agency approach to safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.

Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. **All staff** must:

- ensure they maintain clear professional boundaries at all times. Further information is available in the Staff Code of Conduct.
- be vigilant as to what is happening around them – with both customers and colleagues – and be aware of the different types and indicators of abuse. Further information is available in the supporting process / guidance.
- be familiar with this Safeguarding Policy, the supporting process / guidance and the Duty of Care reporting system
- undertake safeguarding awareness training as appropriate to their role
- raise any concerns they may have
- keep factual records of any incident / concern.

Additionally, **all managers** must ensure that:

- they contribute to developing a culture that does not tolerate abuse and which encourages people to raise concerns
- they listen to and support staff raising concerns
- their staff are familiar with Paradigm's agreed Safeguarding Policy and supporting processes and that they undertake necessary training
- no unsanctioned investigations are conducted.

Specific responsibilities

Paradigm's designated Lead Officer for Safeguarding is Kirsty Pepper, Regional Director. This role has the following responsibilities:

- owner of the Safeguarding Policy and the supporting procedures / guidance
- embedding safeguarding practice across the organisation
- overseeing training on safeguarding
- ensuring concerns of abuse / neglect within supported housing are reported to the relevant Safeguarding Team and, where requested, to the local authority Supporting People Team
- overall monitoring of Duty of Care concerns, with a view to identifying trends and lessons to be learnt for the future, including recommendations for changes to policy, procedure or service delivery
- reviewing individual safeguarding cases, at least annually, to identify any learning for the organisation.

They are supported in this role by the Tenancy Intervention and Enforcement Manager.

Each **Housing (patch) Officer** is responsible for:

- familiarising themselves with the procedures and protocols used by the local Safeguarding Teams in the areas where they work
- receiving Duty of Care concerns in relation to the well-being of customers, including concerns of abuse or neglect, raised by staff, contractors, neighbours or other organisations
- agreeing, together with their manager, an appropriate course of action, accessing expert advice where necessary

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-operating with social services and/or the police in any enquiry or investigation • keeping adequate records, including via the Duty of Care system. <p>Housing Operations Managers / Team Leaders are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing regular supervision and ensuring supported decision making • providing management oversight and ensuring high standards of practice • authorising and raising alerts to local Safeguarding Teams • supporting and advising on information-sharing practice • ensuring that adequate records are kept, including via the Duty of Care system • monitoring all open Duty of Care / Safeguarding cases in their area and authorising closure of cases • advising the Communications Team of potential media interest in a case. <p>The Head of Policy & External Affairs will be responsible for handling any media interest in a safeguarding case.</p> <p>The Managing Director of Property Services has responsibility for ensuring our contractors and subcontractors are aware of their responsibility, and the agreed process, to raise any concerns to Paradigm.</p> <p>The Head of Procurement is responsible for ensuring that our procurement documentation and processes adequately reference our requirements regarding contractors, subcontractors and agents.</p> <p>The Head of People Management has the following specific functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring the necessary DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks are undertaken when recruiting staff • reviewing existing employment checks as required • sharing information on staff found to be unsuitable to work with children or adults at risk by referring their details to the DBS • ensuring compliance with the Staff Code of Conduct • supporting and advising on relevant HR policies and procedures (e.g. whistle blowing policy, disciplinary procedures) • supporting and advising on information-sharing practice in relation to HR issues. |
| <p>Cross references</p> | <p>Reference should also be made to the following policies / documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Procedures and Guidance • Recruitment Policy • Reporting Concerns at Work Policy (Whistleblowing) • Discipline at Work Policy • Grievance Policy • Staff Code of Conduct |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dignity at Work • Vulnerable Persons Policy • Guidance on the Mental Health Capacity Act 2005 • Hoarding & Property Condition Toolkit • Duty of Care IT User Guide • Procurement Strategy and supporting guidance • ASB Policy and supporting guidance • Managing Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy • Whereabouts & Missing Protocol & Procedure (Guidance relating to missing children in our Young People Support Services at the Foyer & Small Steps Project) • Housing of Potentially Dangerous Offenders (under review) • Support Needs and Risk Assessment Policy and Procedures |
| Customer focus and consultation | <p>A draft of this policy was sent to our main local authorities in 2013, and minor changes made as a result of their feedback. Residents were consulted on the draft policy (via the Readership Panel and Residents Forum) when it was originally produced in 2013.</p> <p>The updated policy has been sent for information to Residents Forum (August 2016).</p> |
| Equality, Diversity & Vulnerability | <p>This policy, together with the supporting procedures, aims to ensure those most at risk are protected from abuse and / or neglect. It supports, and is compatible with, the goals of our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy and our Vulnerable Persons Policy.</p> <p>A key principle of safeguarding is that people are listened to, have their views taken into account, are supported to make their own decisions and are treated with dignity and respect at all times. Any interventions will aim to take into account each person's individuality to avoid discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics.</p> <p>In view of the above, a separate Impact Assessment is not deemed necessary.</p> |
| Risk | <p>A Risk Assessment has been carried out for Safeguarding and is contained within the Tenancy Management Risk Map.</p> |
| Value for money | <p>We recognise that effective preventative work (e.g. raising awareness, training staff to be alert to signs of abuse) will be more cost effective than a crisis situation requiring intensive intervention.</p> <p>In the delivery of this policy we will take advantage of the free training, guidance and publicity resources available via our local Safeguarding Boards.</p> |

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| <p>Definitions / clarification of terms</p> <p>NB: Safeguarding terminology may vary between individual Safeguarding Boards.</p> | <p>Abuse</p> <p>Abuse is the violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons.</p> <p>Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to the person subjected to it. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts, and it can be intentional or unintentional.</p> <p>There are many types of abuse – the categories generally recognised in Safeguarding Adults and in the Safeguarding of Children & Young People are listed below.</p> <p>Exploitation, in particular, is a common theme. Abuse is often a crime e.g. assault, rape, theft, fraud, domestic abuse, harassment / discrimination, ASB, hate crime, wilful neglect or mistreatment.</p> <p>Adult</p> <p>Anyone over the age of 18</p> <p>Adult at risk</p> <p>This term is increasingly replacing the term ‘vulnerable adult’. The provisions for safeguarding adults at risk of abuse or neglect contained within the Care Act 2014, apply to an adult who meets the following three-part ‘test’:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has care and support needs (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs) • is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and • as a result of those needs, is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it. <p>The Care Act 2014 also recognises informal carers as people with support needs and the safeguarding framework applies to them.</p> <p>An adult at risk <i>may</i> be someone who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has a physical disability and/or sensory impairment • has a learning disability • has mental health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder • is dependent on others to maintain their quality of life • has a long term illness or condition • lacks the mental capacity to make particular decisions and is in need of care and support. <p>It is important to be clear that just because a person has a disability or is old or frail, they are not automatically ‘at risk’. The extent to which someone is at risk will be determined by a range of factors including personal characteristics (e.g. mental capacity, ability to communicate, degree of physical dependency) and factors associated with their situation (e.g. extent of support network, access to information).</p> <p>Adults - types of abuse</p> <p>The Care Act 2014 encourages local authorities not to limit their view of what constitutes abuse or neglect, and to consider each case individually. The Act lists the following types of abuse but this is not intended to be an exhaustive list:</p> |
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| Physical abuse | Psychological / emotional abuse |
| Financial or material abuse | Sexual abuse |
| Modern slavery | Domestic abuse |
| Discriminatory abuse | Institutional / organisational abuse |
| Neglect and acts of omission | Self-neglect |

Radicalisation / Extremism – increasingly radicalisation and extremism are being included within multi-agency policy and procedures, with the aim of early identification and early intervention to divert people away from being drawn into terrorist activity.

A further type of abuse is known as Mate crime – where someone befriends a vulnerable person deliberately to take advantage of them.

Alerting

This is the process of reporting concerns of actual or suspected abuse or neglect to the local authority. The local authority has a duty to receive the alert and to decide whether a safeguarding enquiry / investigation is necessary or not. Any immediate protection needs will be identified and addressed.

Capacity

This is the ability to make a decision about a particular matter at the time the decision needs to be made. There is a presumption that adults have mental capacity to make informed decisions about their lives. If someone has been assessed as not having mental capacity, decisions will be made in their best interests as set out in the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice.

Children and young people

These terms are generally used interchangeably and refer to children who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. Where someone is 18 or over, but is still receiving children's services, and a safeguarding issue is raised, the matter should be dealt with through adult safeguarding arrangements.

Children - types of abuse

Four categories of child abuse are generally recognised, and a child may suffer more than one type at a time:

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| Physical abuse | Psychological / emotional abuse |
| Neglect | Sexual abuse, including the sexual exploitation of children and young people |

Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

The CAF is a process for gathering and recording information about a child in a standard format, identifying the needs of the child and how the needs can be met.

Disclosure

This is when a person tells someone else of abuse that has happened to them.

Enquiry & Section 42 Enquiry

In adult safeguarding, the local authority will apply the three part 'test' as to whether safeguarding duties apply (see Adult at Risk above). Where the three part test has been met, a Section 42 enquiry is triggered and the local authority must make enquiries, or cause others to do so, in order to establish whether any action needs to be taken to prevent or stop abuse or neglect, and if so, by whom.

Investigation

In adult safeguarding, there is a move away from safeguarding investigations and this term has been replaced by Enquiry and Section 42 Enquiry (see above), except in relation to criminal investigations by the police and where disciplinary investigations are undertaken by employers. In children's safeguarding, the term investigation is still used and refers to the collection of information / evidence about the abuse / neglect that has or might occur. It may also include a criminal or disciplinary investigation.

Multi-agency Policies and Procedures

Each Safeguarding Board is required to develop a multi-agency policy and procedure, providing the local framework for partner organisations to work together, enabling a consistent approach when responding to safeguarding concerns.

Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA)

A mechanism through which statutory agencies aim to manage, in a co-ordinated way, risks posed by sexual and violent offenders, in order to protect the public.

Multi agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

A multi-agency forum for the purpose of managing high risk cases of Domestic Abuse, stalking and so called honour-based violence.

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

A model adopted by some Safeguarding Boards which brings together key partners (e.g. local authority, police, health authority) to work as a team, to share information and decision making and to improve the initial response to safety concerns.

Protection

This is a statutory responsibility (resting with social services) to stop or limit abuse once it has already taken place.

Safeguarding Adults

This means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's well-being is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action².

This definition recognises that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

² *Care and Support Statutory Guidance* (October 2014, updated 2016), Department of Health

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| | <p>Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR):</p> <p>This term replaces Serious Case Review in Adult Safeguarding. Safeguarding Adult Boards (SABs) must arrange a SAR when an adult in its area dies as a result of, or has experienced, serious abuse or neglect, whether known or suspected, and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively together. The aim of the SAR is to identify learning and improvement action.</p> <p>Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children</p> <p>This is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protecting children from maltreatment • preventing impairment of children's health or development • ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care • taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances³. <p>Serious Case Review (SCR)</p> <p>A serious case review (SCR) takes place after a child dies or is seriously injured and abuse or neglect is thought to be involved. It looks at lessons that can help prevent similar incidents from happening in the future.</p> <p>Significant Harm</p> <p>The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of 'significant harm' as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children.</p> <p>The Act gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.</p> <p>Thresholds of intervention</p> <p>These are used by Safeguarding Teams to support decision making and to determine the level of response to an incident (e.g. to invoke safeguarding procedures or to refer back to the service provider). An incident falling below a threshold does not mean it is not serious or can be ignored. Instead, it may mean that the most effective intervention will be via a different service / agency or through an internal investigation / action by the service provider. Thresholds can also be used by service providers to help in the decision whether to raise an alert in the first instance.</p> <p>Young people and children</p> <p>These terms are generally used interchangeably and refer to children who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. Where someone is 18 or over, but is still receiving children's services, and a safeguarding issue is raised, the matter should be dealt with through adult safeguarding arrangements.</p> |
| <p>Review</p> | <p>This policy will be reviewed every three years (unless an earlier review is required following a change in legislation). The review will take account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes to statutory / regulatory guidance and developing good practice • changes in the approach taken by any of our main local Safeguarding Teams • any learning identified as a result of cases arising within Paradigm. |

³ Working Together to Safeguard Children, HM Government (March 2013, updated 2015)

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| Policy owner | Kirsty Pepper – Regional Director |
| Prepared by | Helen Green – Policy Manager |
| Date of Board approval | 28 September 2016 |
| Effective date | October 2016 |
| Revisions | <p>Policy originally approved and ratified July 2013</p> <p>Minor updating September 2014, to reflect the introduction of the Duty of Care IT System</p> <p>Updated August 2016 to reflect the safeguarding provisions contained in the Care Act 2014, effective from April 2015</p> <p>Minor updating August 2017 to reflect organisational restructuring and a change in the Safeguarding Lead Officer / Policy Owner.</p> |
| Next review date | October 2019 |