

Safeguarding Adults and Children at Risk	
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Applies to:	All staff, volunteers and students

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1. Introduction

1.1 Policy Purpose & Aim

Safeguarding is all about ensuring that children, young people, and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and neglect. Safeguarding adults and children from harm is everyone's responsibility. The nature of services we provide mean that staff will have contact with adults and children at risk of abuse or neglect.

This document provides guidance for staff to ensure the principles of safeguarding adults and children are embedded in all aspects of ExtraCare's practice. ExtraCare is committed to the aims of safeguarding which are to:

- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs;
- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible;
- Making safeguarding personal for the adult or child at risk;
- Safeguard in a way that supports an individual in making choices and having control over their lives;
- Promote an approach that maximises independence and provides better outcomes for those concerned;
- Raise staff awareness of safeguarding, and how to recognise and report safeguarding concerns;

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- Raise public awareness so that the local community, alongside visiting professionals, play their part in preventing abuse;
- Recognise and respond to abuse and neglect;
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult or child;
- Address what has caused the abuse or neglect; and
- Promote the PREVENT agenda, and awareness around radicalisation to contribute to meeting these aims, we will:
 - Manage our services in a way which minimises the risk of abuse; and
 - Work with adults with care and support needs and other agencies to mitigate risk and prevent any further abuse or neglect from taking place.

1.2 The objectives of this policy are to:

- Ensure all Trustees, staff, volunteers and students have access to and are familiar with this Safeguarding Adults and Children at Risk Policy and clearly understand their responsibilities within it;
- Ensure that people using our services, and where relevant, their relatives and friends, have access to information about how to report concerns or allegations of abuse;
- Ensure concerns or allegations of abuse are always taken seriously;
- Ensure the Mental Capacity Act 2005 is used to inform any decision making on behalf of adults at risk who lack capacity to make particular decisions for themselves (**see 'Understanding Safeguarding' guidance for further information**);
- Ensure all Trustees, staff, volunteers and students receive training in relation to safeguarding at a level relevant to their role; and
- Ensure there is a named senior safeguarding lead to co-ordinate the safeguarding policy and promote adult and children safeguarding awareness and practice within the organisation and in all our locations.

We will work collaboratively to support people to make decisions about the risks they face in their own lives and protect those who lack the mental capacity to make those decisions.

This policy provides an overarching framework to ensure a proportionate, timely and professional approach is taken, and that safeguarding is co-ordinated across all relevant agencies and organisations. This is essential for the prevention of harm and abuse. Staff can find further information regarding safeguarding procedures within the **'Safeguarding Process' guidance** document this specifically relates to the application of practice within the workplace.

1.3 Scope of the policy

This policy applies across all ExtraCare owned or managed locations and retail shops. This policy aims to safeguard individuals from harm which includes:

- Residents living in our properties (across all tenures) and / or receiving a service from ExtraCare;
- Staff, volunteers, Trustees, students on placement, contractors or agents working for ExtraCare; and

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- Visitors including children and young people to any ExtraCare owned or managed locations.

The policy has been developed in accordance with the relevant statutory and regulatory guidance.

2. Definitions

Term	Definition
Safeguarding	Safeguarding is the process of protecting the health, wellbeing, and human rights of individuals, particularly children and vulnerable adults, to ensure they live free from abuse, harm, and neglect. It involves taking action to prevent harm, responding to concerns, and promoting safety, welfare, and the overall quality of life for those at risk.
Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)	Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is a sector-led initiative which aims to develop an outcome focus to safeguarding work, and a range of responses to support people to improve or resolve their circumstances. It emphasises that the adult or child concerned must always be at the centre of safeguarding, and that their wishes and views should be sought at the earliest opportunity.
Care Quality Commission (CQC)	The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator for health and social care services in England. In safeguarding, the CQC ensures that providers protect people from abuse, neglect, and unsafe care. All safeguarding concerns must be reported to the CQC where required, and providers are expected to follow CQC guidance to maintain safe and effective care for vulnerable adults.
Local Authority (LA)	The Local Authority is responsible for protecting children and vulnerable adults within its area from abuse, neglect, or harm. It oversees investigations, provides support services, and works with health, care, and other agencies to ensure that individuals at risk are safe. All safeguarding concerns must be reported to the Local Authority in line with statutory guidance.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a senior staff member appointed to take lead responsibility for safeguarding adults and children at risk. The DSL's role includes managing and responding to safeguarding concerns, providing guidance and support to staff, maintaining records, and ensuring timely reporting to relevant authorities, such as the Local Authority or CQC.
Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) or (PoA)	A Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) or (PoA) is a legal document that gives a person(s) (known as the attorney) the authority to make decisions on behalf of another person (known as the donor). This arrangement is usually made when the donor wants to ensure that their wishes are respected should they become unable to make certain decisions for themselves in the future.

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3. Regulatory and Legal Considerations

3.1 Legal and Regulatory Requirements – Safeguarding

ExtraCare recognises its statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of Adults and Children at Risk. All staff must comply with relevant legislation, statutory guidance, and regulatory standards, including:

- **Children Act 1989 & 2004** – safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- **Care Act 2014** – safeguarding adults at risk.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (statutory guidance)** – promoting inter-agency cooperation.
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006** – ensuring unsuitable individuals are barred from working with vulnerable people.
- **Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014** – duties on safeguarding within care services.

ExtraCare complies with the regulatory oversight of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and local safeguarding authorities. All safeguarding concerns must be reported promptly, recorded accurately, and managed in line with internal safeguarding procedures. Staff are required to undertake regular safeguarding training and follow organisational policies to ensure the protection and wellbeing of all service users.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility, including all staff, managers, directors, Board members, students, volunteers and involved customers. Everyone has a responsibility to prevent, and report concerns of abuse or neglect. The below outlines individual roles and responsibilities.

Board and Retail Board	Trustees are required to undertake regular safeguarding training and know how to manage and record risks appropriately. Trustees will review and scrutinise safeguarding concerns, trends, and key risks for ExtraCare via reports presented at the Board meetings. The aim is to ensure robust management and safe practice within the organisation in line with the Trustees Escalation Framework. Trustees shall seek assurance to ensure that individual with Director level responsibility for the quality and safety of care, and for meeting the fundamental standards, are fit and proper to carry out this role. (<i>Relevant legislative & regulatory requirements: The Care and Quality Commission – Regulation 5</i>)
Executive Director Operations	As the accountable officer has overall responsibility for ensuring the implementation of effective safeguarding Adults and Children at Risk procedures. Is responsible for notifying the Board of any serious incidents which meet the escalation framework thresholds.

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Head of Care and Wellbeing/Senior Safeguarding Lead	Has day to day responsibility for ensuring that ExtraCare operate within the procedures set out in this document and has a duty to advise the Executive Director Operations and the Board of Trustees of any 'serious concerns' which may be reported to the Charities Commission or other regulators. In their dual role as the Senior Safeguarding Lead for the Charity, they will attend specialist training in the safeguarding of adults and children at risk. They will provide advice and guidance as and when required and will act as required as the professional interface with other agencies, in conjunction with staff, in the ongoing management of any cases where abuse is identified or suspected. They will provide professional leadership and expertise for the implementation of this procedure. The Head of Care and Wellbeing will report safeguarding concerns and data analysis to the Board quarterly.
Care Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead	In their dual role as the Deputy Senior Safeguarding Lead for the Charity, the Care Lead will attend specialist training in the safeguarding of adults and children at risk. They will provide advice and guidance as and when required and will act as required as the professional interface with other agencies, in conjunction with staff, in the ongoing management of any cases where abuse is identified or suspected. The Care Lead will work with the Head of Care and Wellbeing to identify cases that may result in an insurance claim and report to the Governance and Compliance team.
Head of Governance	The Head of Governance will notify insurers or report cases of serious concern to the Charity Commission or Regulator for Social Housing if necessary.
Managers/Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)	Managers/DSL for any person who is suspected of being at risk of abuse will have the overall responsibility for the management of the individual case and will ensure that appropriate liaison with members of the team, both internal to and external to ExtraCare takes place. The responsible Registered Manager/DSL is accountable for reporting safeguarding to the CQC (where applicable) and Local Authority. All safeguarding concerns must be documented in accordance with ExtraCare's reporting procedures.
Learning and Improvement Group (LIG)	Where lessons learned are identified through safeguarding these cases will be raised for review and discussion at the learning and improvement group (LIG) and any appropriate action(s) will be determined.

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All Staff	All Trustees, staff, volunteers and students have a duty to report suspected, alleged or actual harm or abuse involving an adult or child at risk. Staff should be aware of and follow ExtraCare's policy and work instructions. Safeguarding adults and children at risk involves multi-agency working together to ensure that health and social care is appropriately coordinated, and individuals are protected from potential or actual harm or abuse. Location and Registered Care Managers should maintain close and effective links with all relevant statutory and voluntary agencies to collectively ensure that adults and children at risk are safeguarded.
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5. Policy Statement

Statement of Commitment

5.1 ExtraCare is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all service users in line with statutory guidance and best practice. All safeguarding activities are guided by the following six principles:

Six Principles of Safeguarding

1. **Empowerment** – Service users are supported to make their own decisions and provide informed consent wherever possible.
2. **Prevention** – Measures are taken to prevent harm, abuse, or neglect before it occurs.
3. **Proportionality** – Actions taken in response to safeguarding concerns are appropriate and proportionate to the level of risk identified.
4. **Protection** – All reasonable steps are taken to protect service users from abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
5. **Partnership** – ExtraCare works collaboratively with staff, external agencies, families, and the community to promote safeguarding.
6. **Accountability** – All staff and the organisation are accountable for their safeguarding practices and decisions, maintaining transparency and responsibility

What is a safeguarding concern

5.2 A 'safeguarding concern' is when any person has a reasonable cause to believe that:

- An adult has care and/or support needs;
- May be experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect; and
- Is unable to protect themselves from that abuse or neglect because of their care and support needs.

There are eleven recognised types of abuse under safeguarding duty; further details and definitions of these can be found in the '**Understanding Safeguarding**' guidance document.

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- 5.3 If based on the presenting information available, it appears that these stages are met then a safeguarding concern should always be raised with the local authority and if the individual at risk is in receipt of a regulated care activity this will also need to be notified to the CQC. In an emergency, the emergency services should be contacted immediately by dialling 999. Whenever there is information which indicates that an adult or child may be, or is, at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect, or exploitation, this should be shared with the local authority even when it is also shared with other agencies that may need to be advised, such as the Care Quality Commission or the police.

Where possible and safe to do so, the person contacting the local authority regarding the safeguarding concern should have had a conversation with the adult or child regarding their consent, views and wishes (Making Safeguarding Personal). The exception to this could be if the person contacting the local authority was unable to have a conversation because of concerns which may increase the risk for the adult at that time.

Preventing harm and abuse

- 5.4 All ExtraCare staff are encouraged to raise and discuss concerns including safeguarding concerns, however small they may seem. This is to encourage an open and honest culture that is responsive, proactive and seeks to reduce and manage risk through early identification and intervention.

The most effective way to safeguard adults and children from abuse and neglect is to enable them to safeguard themselves, effective prevention in safeguarding is not about over-protective or risk averse practice.

The prevention of abuse and neglect should occur in the context of person-centred support and personalisation (Making safeguarding personal), with individuals empowered to make choices and supported to manage risks. Prevention of abuse and neglect includes integrated working, appropriate information sharing, community participation, public awareness, as well as awareness raising and skills development with adults and children at risk.

‘Safeguarding process’ guidance document demonstrates the safeguarding decision process and the appropriate reporting pathway. The ‘Safeguarding thresholds’ document offers further guidance around when to report a concern where a Local Authority threshold document or referral definition is **not** available or for internal monitoring processes.

Safe environment

- 5.5 ExtraCare as an employer shall ensure that they:
- Meet their responsibilities for obtaining Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and referring to the DBS and relevant professional bodies. It is an offence for any employer to employ someone, paid or unpaid, in a regulated activity when that person is known to have been barred under the DBS;
 - Meet their professional responsibilities under employment and other legislation;
 - Ensure new staff are suitably trained to enable them to understand how to recognise signs of abuse and neglect associated with Adults and Children as part of their induction; and
 - Have robust management systems in place for ongoing training and support.

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Prevent

- 5.6 The Government's counter-terrorism strategy, PREVENT should be consulted in relation to any safeguarding concerns raised in relation to radicalisation. This strategy has four elements (further information can be found in the **Safeguarding Guidance – PREVENT**):
- Prepare;
 - Protect;
 - Pursue; and
 - Prevent
- 5.7 The seriousness of harm or the extent of the abuse is not always clear at the point of the concern. All reports of suspicions or concerns should be approached with a non-biased and open-minded outlook. Look for any indicators that suggest a person is at risk of harm, such as changes to demeanour or behaviour. Make a point of recording these indicators. Through monitoring these signs and reviewing them regularly you may identify a safeguarding issue.

Recognising signs of abuse in Children and Young People

- 5.8 Children are often present at our locations, either as visitors with their families or as part of intergenerational groups. It can be very hard for children and young people to speak out about abuse. Often, they fear there may be negative consequences if they tell anyone what's happening to them. Some may delay telling someone about abuse for a long time, while others never tell anyone, even if they want to.

It is vital that children and young people can speak out and that whoever they tell takes them seriously and acts on what they've been told. Even if a child doesn't tell someone verbally about what's happened to them, there may be other indicators that something is wrong. The five common ways that children convey their abuse:

- help-seeking behaviour;
 - telling without words;
 - partially telling;
 - telling others; and
 - telling in detail.
- 5.9 If at any point, a child or young person is on our premises and either discloses information that would be of a safeguarding concern, an incident is witnessed or there is suspicion that abuse may be occurring this must be reported immediately as detailed in this document and associated guidance notes.
- 5.10 A referral, in the context of child protection, is when someone contacts Children's Services because they have concerns about the safety and well-being of a child. Anyone can make a referral including a parent, wider family member, friend, doctor, teacher or health visitor.

Sharing information without consent

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- 5.11 The priority in safeguarding is to ensure the safety and well-being of the adult or child at risk. There may be some occasions when the adult or child at risk does not want to pursue a referral to the local authority.

The following definitions are examples of where overriding public interest criteria applies, and the safeguarding referral process should be followed despite not having the individual's consent:

- A death or serious injury may occur;
- The individual lacks capacity under Mental Capacity Act 2005 (see [Mental Capacity Policy](#));
- Sharing information may prevent a crime;
- ExtraCare staff members are implicated; - The alleged abuser also has care and support needs;
- A serious crime has taken place;
- Court order; and
- It is believed that the individual is under duress or coercion. If the decision is to act without the individual's consent, they should be informed that this is being done and of the reasons why.

Historical abuse

- 5.12 Abuse that took place when a person was under 18 years old is not an Adult Safeguarding issue but dependant on the concern, could be a child safeguarding issue, irrespective of how old that person is now. In certain cases, the relevant Children's Social Care department may need to be informed, if for example, the person who caused harm, is considered as a continued risk to other children.

Adults who disclose historical childhood abuse can be advised that this is a crime and that they can still report this to the Police, if they wish to do so.

Raising a safeguarding concern

- 5.13 All safeguarding concerns should be taken seriously however there are cases that ExtraCare consider to be so serious that they are escalated to senior management as soon as possible these are:
- Victim required medical treatment/intervention because of ExtraCare actions or omissions;
 - The death or suspected death of a resident because of abuse or neglect – instances of this nature should also be escalated to the Executive Director Operations and the Board;
 - Police involvement; and
 - The victim suffered physical harm because of a medication error, pressure sores or other physical injury. The responsible manager will monitor and record the ongoing care and wellbeing of the resident during any adult safeguarding enquiry.
- 5.14 Safeguarding concerns should be fully documented by the first person to report the suspected abuse, and at all subsequent stages by those involved with the adult or child. Concerns are recorded using the Safeguarding contact, concern and referral form/Local Authority referral form/portal download and should be completed and recorded on the ExtraCare

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centralised safeguarding recording system within a **24-hour period** after a concern is identified, whether it becomes substantiated or not.

If the person handling the concern does not have access to the ExtraCare central safeguarding recording system the case should be emailed to safeguarding@extracare.org.uk for this to be actioned.

When the safeguarding concern relates to individual(s) in receipt of care, the CQC notification process should also be followed by the Registered Care Manager.

Further guidance regarding the recording of a safeguarding concern can be found in the **‘Safeguarding Process’** guidance document.

Whistleblowing – Safeguarding

- 5.15 Whistleblowing is the process whereby an employee raises a concern about malpractice, wrongdoing, risk, or illegal proceedings that they have witnessed in the workplace which harms or creates a risk of harm to the people who use the service, employees, or the wider community.

Whistleblowing is an essential part of safeguarding adults and children: Everyone deserve to be always treated with dignity and respect. In circumstances where they are not being treated this way, whistleblowing ensures that the malpractice is acted upon and that vulnerable adults or children receive the care and support they deserve.

For staff who provide care and support to residents, they have a duty of care towards vulnerable adults and a responsibility to draw attention to poor practice in the workplace.

ExtraCare encourages employees to challenge poor and dangerous practices and promotes a culture of openness and honesty to ensure employees feel confident to raise any concerns they have. Should staff have concerns about practice which harms or creates a risk of harm to vulnerable adults, they are encouraged to speak with their line manager in the first instance or the Senior Safeguarding Lead. However, someone may choose not to do this for multiple reasons and should therefore follow the procedure as outlined in our **Whistleblowing policy**.

6. Monitoring and Review

- 6.1 ExtraCare will monitor compliance with this policy and procedure in the following way:
- The Care and Wellbeing team will monitor all safeguarding activity including the number of concerns raised, safeguarding trends and where/whether concerns are being reported to the relevant local authority and the CQC;
 - Safeguarding Review Panel (SRP) meetings will be held to review individual safeguarding cases to provide assurance regarding referrals, risk mitigation, and actions taken. Where these elements are not evident, SRP members will follow up with the appropriate DSL;
 - Awareness of this safeguarding policy is covered within the ExtraCare induction programme of all new staff, students, trustees and volunteers,
 - Staff understanding of safeguarding should be checked within one to one/supervision meetings;
 - Where staff in identified roles are unable to attend face-to-face safeguarding training before their training expiry date, the safeguarding eLearning module must be completed

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to maintain compliance. Staff should then attend the next available face-to-face training session at the earliest opportunity;

- The Learning and Development Manager will monitor the update of safeguarding training as part of their continual monitoring of mandatory training, compliance of this, will be reported to the Head of Operations, Head of Care and Wellbeing, Regional Operations Managers and the Care Lead for action as required;
- The Care Lead will monitor safeguarding training uptake as part of the ongoing oversight of mandatory training for care staff in line with CQC regulatory requirements. Any areas of non-compliance will be reported to the appropriate Registered Care Manager for appropriate action;
- The Head of Care and Wellbeing will review incidents relating to Safeguarding and report concerns / investigations / lessons learned to the Board, and the Executive Director Operations;
- The Head of Care and Wellbeing will be responsible for adding any specific adult and children safeguarding risks to the Operational Risk Register as they arise, and this Risk Register will be monitored through ExtraCare's risk management procedures;
- ExtraCare Designated Safeguarding Leads will meet on a quarterly basis to discuss safeguarding statistics, lessons learned, hot topics, and best practice; and
- Safeguarding will form part of a standard agenda through meetings held with Registered Care Manager's led by the Care Lead.

6.2 This policy will be reviewed every three years, unless there is a legal or regulatory change.

7. Associated Policies

Mental Capacity Policy (and DoLs guidance)	Whistleblowing Policy
DBS Policy	Complaints Policy
Domestic Abuse – Residents policy and guidance	Domestic Abuse – Staff Policy
Trustee escalation framework	Duty of Candour Policy and guidance
Major Incident Policy	Data Protection (GDPR) Policy
Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy	Belonging at ExtraCare
Medication Policy and guidance	

8. Associated Work Instructions

Understanding Safeguarding guidance	Safeguarding Process guidances
Safeguarding threshold document	Safeguarding guidance - PREVENT
Safeguarding Decision flowchart (printable version)	Mental Capacity Assessment (MCA) and best interest work instruction.

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