



WEST BLETCHLEY COUNCIL

Adult Safeguarding Policy

Designated Safeguarding Lead: The Clerk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: The Community Services Manager & The Deputy Clerk

We have an ethos at West Bletchley Council, in which children and adults can feel safe, are valued, respected and listened to.

West Bletchley Council is committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of every person in our community, of whatever age, particularly the most vulnerable members, which includes adults with care and support needs. The Care Act 2014 defines adult safeguarding as protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Everyone has a responsibility to report abuse or concerns of abuse.

Safeguarding involves working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect. It is a balancing act which must take into account an adult's right to make informed choices, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted. An adult who has mental capacity is entitled to make their own decision on accepting help.

The exceptions to this are adults

- Who do not have the mental capacity to make decisions for themselves.
- Who are unable to protect themselves.
- Who have disabilities which may make them vulnerable and unable to protect themselves.
- Where children are impacted by the adults decisions.
- Where there is a public interest. For example: There are others who are being abused by the individual.

Abuse in adults can be a single act, repeated acts over a period of time or due to a failure to act, i.e. neglect. It can happen to one person, or several people at the same time and be perpetrated by an individual or group of people.

Abuse can take many forms including:

Physical abuse - This is the injury or mistreatment of an adult, and may include spitting, hitting, pinching, pushing, inappropriate use of restraints, over-medicating force feeding or rough handling.

Domestic abuse - Domestic violence and abuse includes any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been, intimate partners or family

members regardless of gender or sexuality. It also includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Sexual abuse - It can include forcing someone to take part in sexual activity without their consent, including touching, sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment and use of sexual language.

Psychological abuse - This can include persistently ignoring someone, bullying, threatening, intimidating, insulting and humiliating. It may also include depriving someone of their right to make decisions, choose where to go, when to eat, when to get up, when to go to bed and who they spend time with. It is often intended to undermine the victim's self-worth.

Financial or material abuse - This can include stealing, having control over someone's money, fraud or embezzlement. It also includes 'doorstep crime', such as bogus tradesmen or postal, phone or internet scammers.

Sometimes carers, friends or family put pressure on older people to make financial decisions they wouldn't otherwise make. Often this can be around money or possessions, wills, power of attorney, etc.

Modern slavery – includes Human trafficking, Forced labour, Domestic servitude Sexual exploitation, such as escort work, prostitution and pornography, Organ Harvesting and Debt bondage – being forced to work to pay off debts that they never will be able to pay back.

Discriminatory abuse organisational abuse - Unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Neglect and acts of omission - This is a form of abuse, and can include: lack of help going to the toilet, eating, dressing or washing, not seeking medical help or following a care plan, giving too much medication or withholding medication, leaving someone malnourished or dehydrated or failing to provide opportunities for social contact or doing enjoyable things.

Self-neglect - Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety, neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings, an inability to avoid self-harm, a failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs or an inability or unwillingness to manage one's personal affairs.

Hate crime – A hate crime is a prejudice-motivated crime which occurs when a perpetrator targets a victim because of their membership in a certain social group or race.

Some of these would also attract a criminal response as well as a safeguarding response.

Abuse can be carried out by anyone, but often the victim knows their abuser. They may be:

- a partner, relative or friend
- a service or care provider
- a neighbour or friend
- a health or social care worker (including volunteers)
- a stranger

Some adults will be more vulnerable to abuse than others, such as an older person, a person with a physical disability, a learning difficulty or a sensory impairment, someone with mental health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder, a person with a long-term health condition, someone who misuses substances or alcohol to the extent that it affects their ability to manage day-to-day living or someone who is at risk due to circumstances such as homelessness or insecure immigration status.

West Bletchley Council staff will work in accordance with the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Adults Multi Agency Policy and Procedures that have been agreed locally through MK Together Safeguarding Partnership, which are based on the Care Act 2014 statutory guidance <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/adult-social-care/safeguarding-adults-and-children/adult-safeguarding-and-adults-risk-policies-and>

West Bletchley Council will also strive to work in accordance with the local key priorities set by MK together. For 2021-23 the priorities are mental health, child poverty, domestic abuse, violent crime and hate crime.

All workers have a duty to report any safeguarding concerns, and to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest that someone is at risk of harm. If staff have a concern about an adult at risk of abuse and they are in immediate danger, the relevant emergency service should be contacted by ringing 999.

In the first instance staff or volunteers will discuss their concerns with the Safeguarding Lead or one of the deputies to agree the appropriate action. Workers are expected to complete a written record of any concern expressed about an adult safeguarding issue, using an internal adult concern form.

It may be necessary, to make a referral to other agencies including referral to the Milton Keynes Council Access Team and completion of an [Adult Safeguarding Alert Form](#).

The Access team can be contacted on 01908 253772 (email Access.Team@Milton-Keynes.gov.uk) or out of hours on 01908 725005.

By completing this staff agree to the information contained in this form being shared with other agencies, in line with the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures, and to the possible investigation of the allegation that is being made.

All concerns must be filed in the Office securely by the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Reviewed July 2022