



Mid Sussex District Council's Safeguarding Policy

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Mid Sussex District Council Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy

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1. What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding means protecting an individual's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about working together to support adults to make decisions about the risks they face in their own lives and to protect children and also the protection of adults who lack the capacity to make those decisions.

2. Policy statement

Mid Sussex District Council is committed to protect children and adults living within the District from harm and promotes the welfare and protection of children and adults throughout its service provision, policy and service plans.

Mid Sussex District Council is a member of the Multi Agency West Sussex Children's Safeguarding Partnership and also the Multi Agency West Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board and as such this policy supports the national and local guidance/policy recommended by both boards in respect of safeguarding both children and adults.

All staff, volunteers and elected members have a duty to report allegations, disclosures or concerns of abuse or neglect. It is not the Council's job to establish whether abuse is taking place, however it is the Council's responsibility to report any concerns over the welfare of children or adults who are thought to be at risk. This duty extends to the identification of abuse, poor practice by internal staff, volunteers and elected council members as well as allegations brought to the attention of the Council by members of the public.

The Policy is accompanied by an operating procedures document that must be followed in respect of identifying the signs and symptoms of abuse and other safeguarding concerns. This document provides guidance for reporting a concern, making a referral to the safeguarding Hub and identifies Designated Safeguarding Officer's (DSO's) who have additional responsibilities for safeguarding at the Council.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and elected members. Everyone needs to be aware of how and when to report concerns and all staff, volunteers and elected members should undertake appropriate safeguarding training and follow the policy guidance for the reporting of concerns. This responsibility extends to consultants and contractors through procurement arrangements.

In respect of safeguarding, a 'child' is any person under the age of 18 years irrespective of their educational status or living arrangements. This includes unborn children.

In respect of safeguarding, an adult is any person over the age of 18 who meets the following criteria:

- a) Has care and/or support needs
- b) Is experiencing or is at risk of experiencing abuse or neglect
- c) As a result of those care needs is unable to protect themselves from the either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

This policy provides guidance to safeguard children and adults in line with the Working Together to

Safeguard Children guidance and the Care Act 2014. The components of this are;

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- Safeguarding adults in accordance with the Care Act 2014

In addition to safeguarding from abuse Mid Sussex District Council works to promote the welfare and wellbeing of Children and Adults living in the community. This includes the promotion of;

- Physical, mental and emotional health
- Protection from harm and neglect
- Education and training
- Social and economic wellbeing

The Council supports the rights of adults to make decisions based on personal choice and self-determination with the premise that safeguarding should be 'made personal' as detailed in the Care Act 2014.

Mid Sussex District Council will achieve its responsibilities to safeguard children and adults by;

- Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and opinions of children and adults in the communities served by the Council.
- Raising awareness about MSDC's duty of care responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
- Ensuring that staff who come into contact with children, young people or adults at risk as part of their responsibilities are aware of what they need to do if they have concerns.
- Promoting and implementing MSDC's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Having a formal process for the notification to other agencies about potential abuse where appropriate.
- Responding to allegations of abuse or misconduct in line with this policy and WSSCP/WSSAB guidance following where appropriate relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Completion and monitoring of Section 11 audits in accordance with Children's Act 2004.
- To regularly review this policy in line with developments in Local and National Policy including learning from Serious Case Reviews.

4. Key guidance and Legislation

Mid Sussex District Council fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities in accordance with the guidance detailed in the following documents

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, HM Gov
- The Care Act (2014)

- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – advice for practitioners (2015), HM Gov
- Children Act (2004)
- Information Sharing – advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers (2018), Department for Education

The Safeguarding Children and Adults policy also supports the Mid Sussex District Council internal working policies. Details of these can be found on The Wire for internal staff or on the Mid Sussex District Council Website. This Policy should be read in conjunction with internal policies available on The Wire, including:

Lone Working Policy	Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
Whistleblowing Policy	Members Code of Conduct
Information Sharing Protocols	Officers Code of Conduct
Health and Safety Policies	DBS Policy and Procedure
Data Protection Policy	

5. Information Sharing

Mid Sussex District Council information sharing protocols and information sharing agreements are in line with WSSCP/WSSAB guidance. The Council supports the principle of information sharing with key professional agencies and is committed to working closely with partners in all matters relating to safeguarding. In all cases, information shared will be proportionate and pertinent to the issue.

In accordance with Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) information will only be shared without consent where there is a need to safeguard, prevent a crime, comply with a lawful court order or to discharge an overriding duty of care.

Records containing personal information related to safeguarding will be kept on a secure server.

Information requests related to safeguarding will be managed by the Designated Data Protection Officer and recorded in accordance with Local and National Policy.

6. Organisational Accountability and Structure

Accountability for safeguarding lies with the Chief Executive as detailed in the Children’s Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014. The Council has delegated this responsibility to the following organisational structure:

Corporate lead for safeguarding - Head of Digital and Customer Services

- The Corporate Lead for Safeguarding is responsible on behalf of the Chief Executive for leading the implementation of the work programme for Safeguarding within the Council

Cabinet Member - The Elected Member of the Council responsible for safeguarding Children and Adults is the Cabinet Member for Customer Services.

Lead Safeguarding Officer - Mid Sussex District Council has a Lead Safeguarding Officer (0.2fte) with responsibility for representing the Council at the District and Boroughs Safeguarding Group (which incorporates the WSSCP/WSSAB Sub Groups), co-ordinates training for staff, safeguarding referrals and campaigns related to safeguarding undertaken by the Council or WSSCP/WSSAB. The Lead Safeguarding Officer will also support the Designated Safeguarding Officers. This post sits within the Community Services, Policy and Performance Business Unit.

Designated Safeguarding Officers – Each Business Unit will have a Designated Safeguarding Officer who holds responsibility for ensuring that all safeguarding concerns are reported to the relevant agencies in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy and that the information is reported correctly. Details of the Designated Safeguarding Officers will be displayed within each Business Unit and on the safeguarding pages on the Wire.

Business Unit Leaders

Business Unit Leaders should ensure that all staff within their teams:

- Have read and understood the policy and procedures as part of their induction and are able to access it for reference.
- Are aware of and have understood their role in terms of reporting concerns and the correct channels for reporting.
- Have undertaken mandatory Level 1 online training and any further safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

7. Safer Recruitment

Mid Sussex District Councils Recruitment and Selection procedures are in accordance with the principle of safer recruitment. This includes the process of ensuring all necessary checks are carried out on staff and Elected Members of the Council. At least two written references are required when recruiting staff.

Safeguarding and the use of DBS (Disclosure Barring Service) reporting is detailed in job descriptions and at interview (role specific). All employees are required to undertake mandatory safeguarding training and are expected to apply their knowledge as a part of their working practice.

In accordance with DBS procedures Mid Sussex District Council will report any individuals to the DBS who through the course of recruitment checks have a record for having caused harm to a Child or Adult.

8. Training and Development

Mid Sussex District Council supports the development and training needs of its staff to ensure they can fulfil their duties and to ensure that the safeguarding policy is implemented effectively.

Mid Sussex District Council provides tiered training for staff appropriate to role.

Tier	Target group	Frequency
Tier 1	Mandatory for all staff, volunteers and Elected Members of the Council.	Induction then every 3 years

Tier 2	Front line staff who come into contact with members of the public.	Every 3 years
Tier 3	Designated Safeguarding Officers and staff who are most likely to make referrals.	Every 3 years

Additional training on relevant subjects related to safeguarding can be provided by internal or external providers as appropriate.

Staff training and development needs should be identified at induction, probationary period reviews and annual Personal Development Reviews. Training will also be reviewed in line with relevant legislation changes. Training will be facilitated internally or through accredited external providers depending on subject matter and relation to job description. There will also be updates provided to staff relevant to any local or national policy changes.

9. External Organisations

Mid Sussex District Council provides funding to other organisations for a range of services and projects. These providers are required to demonstrate that they meet the safeguarding requirements as directed by the Council in line with the safeguarding responsibilities. This will include providing evidence of appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures, evidence of safer recruitment practice and training for staff and volunteers and ongoing commitment to safeguarding within their organisation.

10. Procurement

Contractors or organisations working with or on behalf of the Council will need to demonstrate evidence of their ability to meet the Council's requirements for safeguarding. All contracts which involve services which are likely to encounter Children or adults must comply with the Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex Council's shared safeguarding procurement guidance. Evidence of compliance with the guidance must be provided at the point of tender and may be subsequently checked periodically through the course of the contract. This guidance is available on The Wire.