

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Purpose

Creating a safe and welcoming environment, where everyone is respected and valued, is at the heart of Suffolk Family History Society's Safeguarding Policy.

We aim to provide an environment where there is a culture of vigilance as to the dangers of abuse. It is important to ensure that the organisation is run in a way that actively prevents harm, harassment, bullying, abuse and neglect and that it is able to respond well if there is a problem so that people who take part in SFHS activities are safe.

The Safeguarding Policy will enable concerns to be raised and responded to consistently with the aim of protecting any person who may be at risk from actual or potential harm.

Safeguarding practice should reflect statutory responsibilities and government guidance whilst complying with best practice as outlined by Suffolk County Council. Consequently, the organisation has a set of procedures in place to ensure that the correct steps are taken when there is a concern that someone is not safe or at risk of harm.

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

Recognition

It is important to know how to recognise abuse or harm that may affect the people that SFHS has contact with. Many people don't understand why adults need safeguarding. All adults have a right to make unwise decisions, including the choice of not taking action to protect themselves. Everyone has different levels of vulnerability and each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives.

It is acknowledged that children and adults may experience different types of harm and abuse and the way that concerns are reported are managed differently. However, the overarching objective for both is to enable children and adults to live a life free from abuse or neglect.

When safeguarding adults, it is vital to consider whether they might be subject to coercion or undue influence.

There are several categories of abuse that may be experienced by adults. These include discrimination, financial or material, cyber bullying, exploitation, self-neglect, domestic abuse, physical, modern slavery, sexual, neglect, emotional or psychological, forced marriage and radicalisation.

Administrators of the Society's online presences (SFHS website and Social Media, Facebook etc) will monitor these for any possible cyber bullying, coercion or undue influence.

Children are people aged under the age of 18. All organisations and individuals that work with children have a responsibility to look out for their welfare and best interests and prevent harm to either their health or development.

There are several categories of abuse that may be experienced by children. These include bullying and cyber bullying, child sexual exploitation, child trafficking, grooming, criminal exploitation and gangs, neglect, physical or sexual abuse, domestic abuse and FGM.

There may be occasions when members of SFHS work with children, in particular if they work with schools on curriculum projects. Schools have their own Safeguarding Policies and designated staff to deal with any concerns.

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For more information on each of these categories see Appendix 3

For information about what you should and should not do see Appendix 4

Reporting & Recording

Appendix 1 outlines the procedures that should be followed.

Appendix 2 contains the form that needs to be completed.

SFHS will respond without delay to every concern raised that a person may have been harmed or may be at risk of harm. The Society's Safeguarding Officer will be informed if there is any safeguarding issue.

In the instance of a concern about a child or young person under 18 years of age when SFHS is working with external groups (such as schools, scouts, guides, libraries or other organisations) this will be raised without delay with that organisation's designated safeguarding officer. If no other groups are involved then the Society's Safeguarding Officer will be informed of any safeguarding issues.

We will work in partnership with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership (suffolksp.org.uk), supporting the police, local authority and other official bodies in any subsequent investigations.

Abuse of power will be challenged, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

Participation in Community Events

There may be occasions when DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) clearance is required in order for Society members to take part in community events, in which case members may seek advice from the Safeguarding Officer.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management will be shared on a need to know basis only, and will be kept secure at all times.

Position	Name	Tel	Email
Safeguarding Officer:	Charmian Thompson	07598106645	safeguarding@suffolkfhs.org.uk
Deputy:			safeguarding@suffolkfhs.org.uk

MASH reporting helpline 0345 606 1499

If urgent, call 999

The Society's Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed by the Trustees at least once a year.

Accepted at AGM October 2022

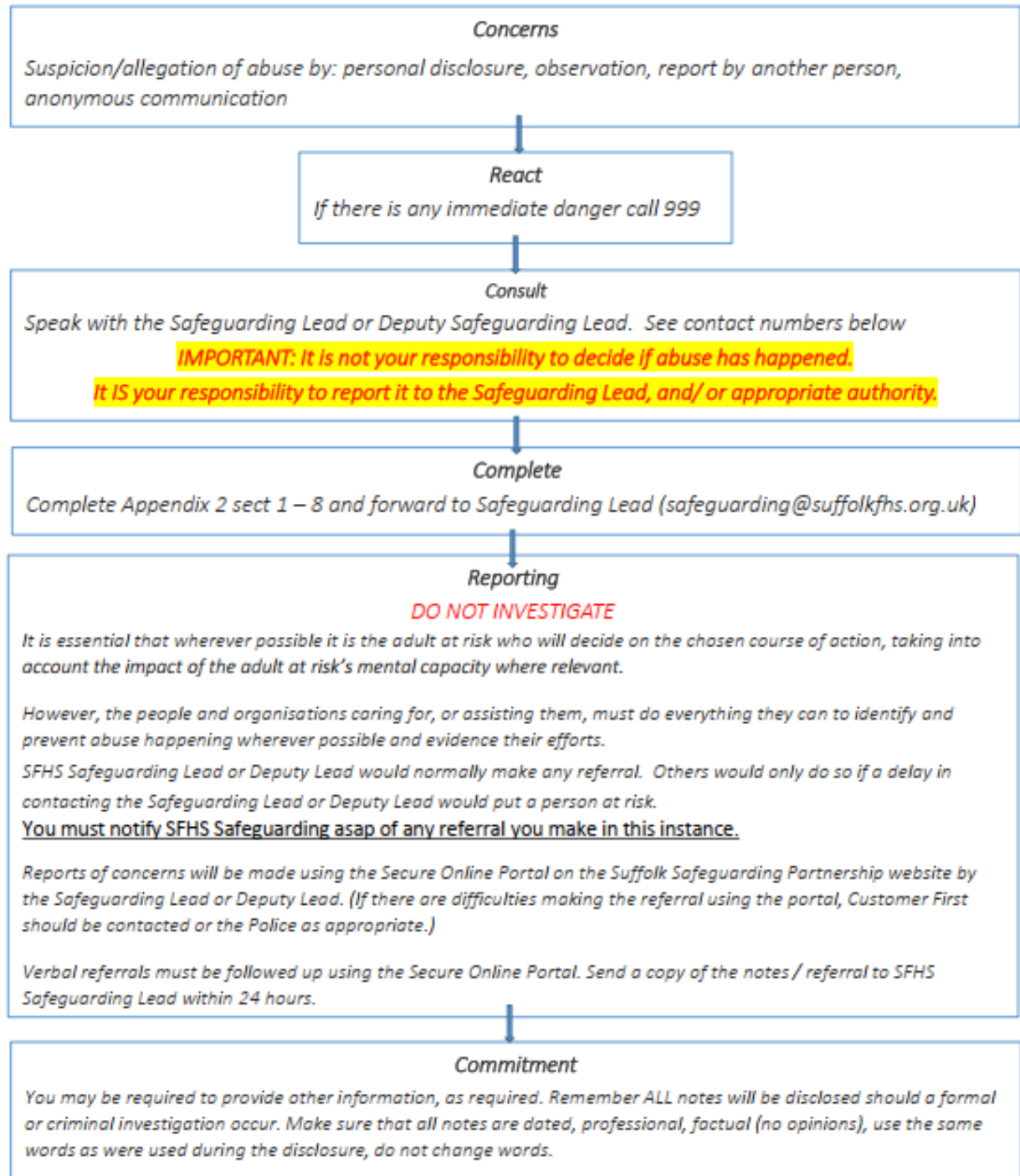
Reviewed and approved by the Society Trustees

Name: Andy Kerridge

Signature:

Date: January 2026

APPENDIX 1: PROCEDURES: FLOWCHART FOR REFERRAL OF ACTUAL OR SUSPECTED ABUSE



Contacts:

Professional Consultation Line on 03456 061 499 to speak with a MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) social worker. Customer First Suffolk 0808 800 4005

Safeguarding Lead: Charmian Thompson 07598 106645 Email: safeguarding@suffolkfhs.org.uk

Safeguarding Deputy Lead:

Appendix 2A - Safeguarding Report Form (Adult)

To be completed as fully as possible if you have concerns regarding abuse.

If it is safe to do so, it is important to inform the individual about your concerns and that you have a duty to pass the information onto the Safeguarding Lead. The Safeguarding Lead will then look at the information and start to plan a course of action.

Section 1: Details of the person you have concerns about

Name	
Address	
Date of Birth/ Age	
Contact number	
Emergency contact if known	
Consent to share information with emergency contact	

Section 2: Details of the person completing this form

Name	
Contact phone number(s)	
Email address	
Your Role & Location in SFHS	

Section 3: Details of concern

Please explain why you are concerned. Give details about what you have seen/been told/other that makes you believe the person is at risk of harm or is being abused or neglected (include dates/times/evidence from records/photos etc.)
Have you discussed your concerns with the person? What are their views, what have they stated about what they want to happen and what outcomes do they want?
Reasons for not discussing your concerns with the person: eg discussion would put them or others at risk / the person appears to lack mental capacity / the person is unable to communicate their views. Please explain:

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Section 4: Details of the person thought to be causing harm (if known)

Name	
Address	
Date of Birth/Age	
Relationship/connection to person of concern	
Do they have contact with others at risk?	

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Section 5: Risk to others

Are any other adults at risk?	Yes / No / Not known – delete as appropriate. If yes please fill in another form for each person
Are any children at risk?	Yes / No / Not known – delete as appropriate. If yes please fill in another form for each child

Section 6: Action

What action have you taken if any /agreed with the person to reduce the risks?

Section 7: Other agencies contacted

Who has been contacted? Note any reference number / contact details / advice gained / action being taken.
Who else has been informed of this issue? – and what was the reason for information sharing?

Section 8: Consultation with Safeguarding Lead

Date and time completed Form copied to Safeguarding Lead	
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Signed:

Date:

SFHS Safeguarding Lead: Charmian Thompson 07598 106645 Email: safeguarding@suffolkfhs.org.uk

Safeguarding Deputy Lead:

SAFEGUARDING LEAD ONLY

Section 9: Sharing the concerns about Adults (To be completed by Safeguarding Lead)

Details of your contact with the adult at risk of harm.
Have they consented to information being shared outside of SFHS?

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Details of contact with the Local Authority Safeguarding Team/MASH where the adult at risk of harm lives. (Advice can be still sought without giving personal details if you do not have consent for a referral.)	
Details of any other agencies contacted:	
Details of the outcome of this concern:	
Date and time action completed by Safeguarding Lead	

Signed:

Date:

APPENDIX 3

Categories of adult abuse explained

Discrimination

This is abuse based on difference or perceived difference, particularly with respect to race, gender and disability. (Equality Act)

Financial or Material

This encompasses theft, fraud, internet scamming, and coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements. It may also include wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions as well as the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits. This might include considering whether the adult is subject to coercion or undue influence.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying occurs when someone repeatedly makes fun of another person online, or repeatedly picks on another person through emails or text messages. It can also involve using online forums with the intention of harming, damaging, humiliating, or isolating another person. It includes various different types of bullying, including racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying related to special education needs and disabilities. The main difference is that, instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying face-to-face, they use technology as a means to do it.

Exploitation

This is when people are befriended by others who go on to exploit or take advantage of them. It may not be an illegal act, but it still has a negative effect on the individual. This abuse is carried out by someone the person knows, and it often happens in private.

Self-neglect

This covers a wide range of behaviour, but it can be broadly defined as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health, or surroundings. An example of self-neglect is behaviour such as hoarding.

Domestic Abuse

This includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse perpetrated by anyone within a person's family. It also includes so-called "honour" based violence.

Physical

This includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, restraint, and misuse of medication. It can also include inappropriate sanctions.

Modern Slavery

This encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude.

Sexual

This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented, or was pressured into consenting.

Neglect and Acts of Omission

This includes ignoring medical or physical care needs and failing to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services. It also includes the withdrawing of the necessities of life, including medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.

Emotional or Psychological

This includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, stalking, verbal abuse, isolation, or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Forced Marriage

This is a term used to describe a marriage in which one or both of the parties are married without their consent or against their will. A forced marriage differs from an arranged marriage, in which both parties consent to the assistance of a third party in identifying a spouse. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 make it a criminal offence to force someone to marry.

Radicalisation

The aim of radicalisation is to inspire new recruits, embed extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals to the legitimacy of a cause. This may be direct through a relationship, or through social media.

Categories of child abuse explained

Bullying and Cyber Bullying

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone.

It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It is usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online. Unlike bullying offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile phone.

Child Sexual Exploitation, trafficking and grooming

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited they are given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and consensual relationship. This is called **grooming**. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused.

Children and young people can be **trafficked** into or within the UK to be sexually exploited. They are moved around the country and abused by being forced to take part in sexual activities, often with more than one person. Young people in gangs can also be sexually exploited.

Criminal exploitation and gangs

Criminal exploitation is when children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes. The word 'gang' means different things in different contexts. It is categorised as peer groups, street gangs and organised criminal gangs.

A peer group is a relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang.

A street gang is a group of young people for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity."

Organised criminal gangs are groups of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). For most crime is their 'occupation.'

It is not illegal for a young person to be in a gang – there are different types of 'gang' and not every 'gang' is criminal or dangerous. However, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs which may be involved in trafficking, drug dealing and violent crime.

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs that exploit young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets - suburban areas and market and coastal towns - using dedicated mobile phone lines or “deal lines”. Children as young as 12 years old have been exploited into carrying drugs for gangs. This can involve children being trafficked away from their home area, staying in accommodation and selling and manufacturing drugs.

Suffolk Response Teams work to tackle the problem of Gangs and County Lines through a multi-agency approach and plan.

Neglect

Neglect can be a lot of different things, which may make it hard to spot, but broadly speaking, there are 4 types of neglect.

Physical neglect: A child's basic needs, such as food, clothing or shelter, are not met or they are not properly supervised or kept safe.

Educational neglect: A parent doesn't ensure their child is given an education.

Emotional neglect: A child does not get the nurture and stimulation they need. This could be through ignoring, humiliating, intimidating or isolating them.

Medical neglect: A child is not given proper health care. This includes dental care and refusing or ignoring medical recommendations.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is any way of intentionally causing physical harm to a child or young person. It also includes making up the symptoms of an illness or causing a child to become unwell.

Sexual abuse

When a child or young person is sexually abused, they are forced or tricked into sexual activities. They might not understand that what is happening is abuse or that it is wrong. Sexual abuse can happen anywhere and it can happen in person or online.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people and if they witness such abuse this is recognised as child abuse.

Female genital mutilation

FGM is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It is also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting'. FGM is carried out for a number of cultural, religious and social reasons. Some families and communities believe that FGM will benefit the girl in some way, such as preparing them for marriage or childbirth. FGM is a practice that is not required by any religion and there are no health benefits.

FGM is a criminal offence in the UK.

Appendix 4

What to do if an individual makes a disclosure

If an adult indicates that they are being harmed or abused, or information received gives rise to concern, **you should:**

- Take it seriously.
- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said, allowing the adult to continue at their own pace.
- Be sensitive.
- Keep questions to a minimum, only ask questions if you need to identify/ clarify what the person is telling you.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in revealing the information.
- Ask them what they would like to happen next.
- Explain what you would like to do next.
- Explain that you will have to share the information with Suffolk Family History Society's Safeguarding Lead.
- Ask for their consent for the information to be shared outside the organisation.
- Make an arrangement as to how you/the Safeguarding Lead can contact them safely.
- Act swiftly to report and carry out any relevant actions.
- Record in writing what was said using the adult's own words as soon as possible.

If a child or young person under the age of 18 indicates that they are being harmed or abused, or information is received which gives rise to concern, **you should:**

- Take it seriously.
- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said, allowing the child/young person to continue at their own pace.
- Be sensitive.
- Keep questions to a minimum, only ask questions if you need to identify/ clarify what you are told.
- Reassure the child / young person that they have done the right thing in revealing the information.
- Explain what you would like to do next.
- Explain that you will have to share the information with the designated person from the school or organisation you are working with or with SFHS Safeguarding Team.
- Act swiftly to report your concerns via the designated safeguarding lead. The safeguarding lead will usually decide whether to make a referral to children's social care.
- Record in writing what was said using the child/ young person's own words as soon as possible.
- Inform the Suffolk Family History Society's Safeguarding Lead of any action you have taken if you have reported your concern with another organisation.

It is important not to:

- Dismiss or ignore the concern.
- Panic or allow shock or distaste to show.
- Be critical or make negative comments.
- Make assumptions or speculate.
- Come to your own conclusions.
- Probe for more information than is offered.
- Promise to keep the information secret.
- Conduct an investigation of the case.
- Confront the person thought to be causing harm.
- Take sole responsibility.
- Tell everyone.