

Reigate and Banstead Safeguarding Policy and Guidance

Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Aim of guidance.....	3
3. Quick guide for any safeguarding concern.....	4
4. What to consider when making a referral.....	5
5. Safeguarding children.....	7
6. Safeguarding adults.....	9
7. Good practice when working with adults and children.....	12
8. Organisational safeguarding responsibilities.....	14
9. Training.....	15

1. Introduction

At Reigate and Banstead Borough Council (RBBC), we believe the safety and well-being of adults, children and young people is of the utmost importance and that they have a fundamental and equal right to be protected from harm regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. We fully recognise our responsibility for safeguarding: the safety, protection and well-being of all adults, children and young people that RBBC supports and interacts with, is paramount and has priority over all other interests.

This guidance applies to anyone working on behalf of RBBC. For the avoidance of doubt this guidance is intended for, staff, volunteers, sessional /casual workers, agency staff and councillors. Its purpose is to protect and enhance the safety and well-being of all children, young people and adults by actively promoting awareness, good practice, and sound procedures. The guidance will consider the safeguarding of children and adults at risk independently, before addressing areas where there is overlap between the two safeguarding areas.

The guidance for Safeguarding Children is underpinned by a range of legislation including, but not limited to:

- The Children Act 1989: [Children Act 1989 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41)
- The Children's Act 2004: [Children Act 2004 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023: [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115276/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_statutory_guidance.pdf)
- The Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership: [Homepage - Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership \(surreyscp.org.uk\)](https://www.surreyscp.org.uk)

The policies and guidance for Safeguarding Adults is supported by:

- The Care Act 2014: [Care Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/18)
- The Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board: [Homepage - Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board \(surreysab.org.uk\)](https://www.surreysab.org.uk)

2. Aim of Guidance

The aims of the guidance are to set out RBBC's policy and procedure on safeguarding adults and children who live, or access facilities, within the Borough. We wish to set clear expectations on how employees and representatives should behave and respond to concerns, in line with Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board and the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership.

RBBC encourages a culture of noticing, listening to and engaging in conversation, with children and adults, seeking their views in ways that are appropriate to their age and understanding.

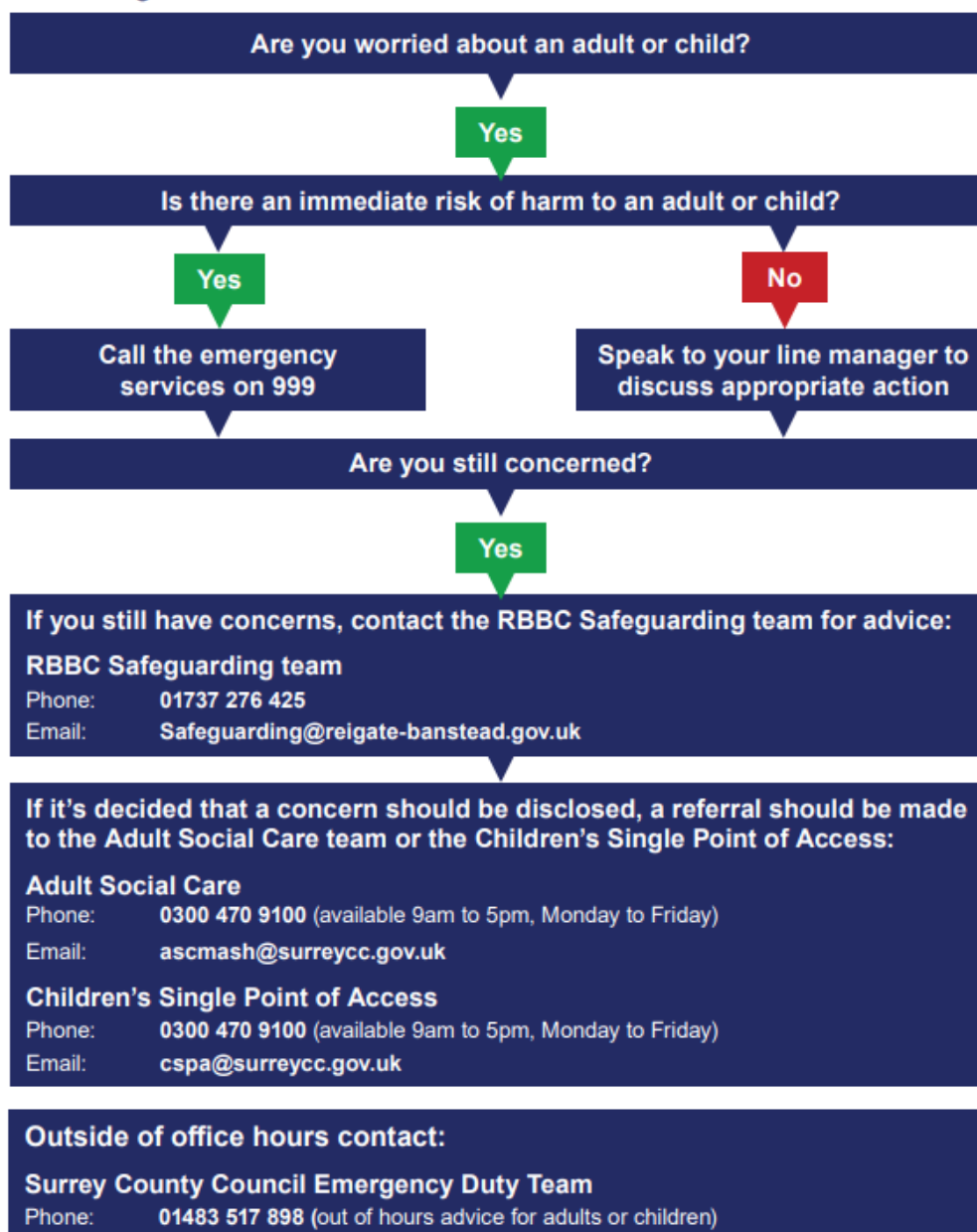
This guidance provides further direction and clarity on the following.

- What to do if you have a Safeguarding Concern
- Considerations when making a referral
- Definitions of harm
- Good practice when working with adults and children
- Organisational Safeguarding Responsibilities
- Training

3. Quick guide for any safeguarding concern

The flow chart advises you on what to do if you have a safeguarding concern

Safeguarding: do you have a concern, or do you need to share a disclosure?



4. What to consider when making a referral

How to make a referral:

To make a referral regarding an adult during office hours, you should call or email the Adult Social Care team. To make a referral about a child, you should call or email the Children's Single Point of Access. If you need to speak to these teams outside of office hours, you should ring the Surrey County Council Emergency Duty Team. Please see the flow chart in section 3 for full contact details.

The difference between a concern and a disclosure

Concern:

A concern is when you may have a feeling or a worry about something that would require further information gathering to understand what action should be taken. This is sometimes based on 'gut feeling' and/or one or more pieces of information where you feel someone could be at risk. A concern would mean that you should speak with a colleague, line manager or safeguarding officer to consider the best course of action.

Disclosure:

A disclosure is when someone is giving you information which means that the person could be or is in immediate danger. A disclosure is usually when something has already happened or is currently happening that is causing a person to suffer. A disclosure will always need immediate action which could involve referring to statutory services.

How to respond to a person sharing their experiences:

- Try to obtain name, DOB, address and contact number.
- Ask the person if they are safe and able to talk.
- Listen carefully rather than asking leading questions.
- Never promise any particular action or not to disclose any information shared.
- Allow silence and/or allow the person to express their feelings – be compassionate regardless of the emotion being expressed, this will help to reassure and validate their feelings.
- Write down carefully the information you have been given as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours and only including the facts of what you have been told.
- Consent should generally be sought to share information wherever possible, but there will be circumstances where this should not be done, for example, if this would place a child or adult at increased risk or you have no way of contacting the person.
- Discuss the disclosure as soon as possible with your manager and/or safeguarding officer. Do not discuss with any other third party or colleagues.

- If the disclosure is from a child, any decision not to tell the parents must be discussed with your line manager or safeguarding officer unless the child or young person is in immediate danger and therefore you should call 999.
- If you are in any way affected by the disclosure, speak to your line manager, safeguarding officer or HR to seek support. You can also contact the Employee Assistance Scheme for confidential support.

Parents/carers involvement

It is good practise to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns. However, you must not discuss your concerns with parent's/ carer's in the following circumstances:

- Where sexual abuse or exploitation is suspected.
- Where organised or multiple abuse is suspected.
- Where fabricated or induced illness is suspected.
- Where female genital mutilation is a concern.
- In cases of forced marriage.
- Where contacting parents / carers would place a child / young person or others at immediate risk.

Gathering information

Whilst as much information should be collated as possible, it is important not to ask leading questions of the child, adult, parent or carer concerned. Open questions such as "How did you get that bruise?" should be used whenever possible. The most important thing to gain information is to **listen carefully** to anything that is said.

Remember that at this stage staff are only collating information accurately and not conducting the early stage of an investigation. The Council is not a Safeguarding investigative agency. That means if there are concerns that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be suffering abuse or neglect a referral to the relevant agencies must be made.

Police Intelligence

In its simplest form, intelligence is information that sheds light on a situation or scenario, enabling the police, and partners, to be proactive in protecting the public. RBBC staff are encouraged to complete a partner intelligence form when they come across non-urgent information they believe may be of interest to the police. Staff can discuss this with the Community Safety or Safeguarding Teams within RBBC or contact partnership.intelligence@surrey.police.uk for the appropriate form. Imminent risks should always be dealt with through a 999 call.

5. Safeguarding Children

Definitions of Harm

For the purpose of this policy, RBBC has defined harm to children as:

- **Neglect** - the persistent failure to meet the basic physical and physiological needs of the young person that results in serious impairment of their health and development, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter and failure to respond to basic emotional needs, such as being cared for when sick.
- **Abandonment** - leaving a child alone and unattended in circumstances that are inappropriate for their age and/ or level of ability.
- **Emotional abuse** – persistent, emotional ill treatment that has a severe adverse effect on the emotional development of children and young people. It may involve conveying to them that they are not wanted, not loved or worthless. It may involve inappropriate expectations (such as taking on the responsibility of an adult within the family) being placed on the young person leaving them frightened and unable to cope. It may also involve the threatening, exploitation or corruption of children and young people.
- **Physical abuse** – hitting, kicking, shaking, slapping, and throwing, scalding, burning, poisoning, drowning, suffocating, or other action intended to cause physical harm or ill health to the child or young person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer covers up the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child or young person within their care.
- **Racial abuse** – any type of verbal or physical abuse that is directed at an individual or group because of their racial or ethnic background.
- **Witnessing ill treatment, including domestic abuse of another person**- this may impact the health or development of a child or young person.
- **Sexual abuse or sexual exploitation** - forcing or enticing a child or young person to participate in sexual activities, whether or not the child or young person is aware or has knowledge of what is happening. It includes child prostitution, encouraging children or young people to watch or participate in the production of pornographic material, online grooming, encouraging children and young people to behave in sexual inappropriate ways. Sexual acts include penetrative (rape or buggery) and non-penetrative acts such as touching or stroking.

- **Online abuse** – Any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or emotional abuse.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** - involves procedures that involve total or partial removal of the female external genitalia or other injury to the female genitalia for non-medical reasons. Predominantly carried out on young girls, it is considered child abuse and is illegal in the UK.
- **County Lines** – refers to urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or *deal lines*. This criminal activity often involves child criminal exploitation as gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 defines ‘consent’ as ‘*if they agree by choice and has the capacity to make that choice*’. The Act, removes the element of consent for many sexual offences for:

- Children/young people under 16 (including under 13).
- Children/ young people under 18 having sexual relations with a person of trust (for example: teachers, youth workers, foster carers, police officers).
- Children / young people under 18 involved with family members over 18.
- Persons with a mental disorder impeding choice or who are induced, threatened or deceived.
- Persons with a mental disorder who have sexual relations with care workers.

In relation to young people under the age of 13, consent is irrelevant. The law says ‘a child under the age of 13 does not, under any circumstances, have the legal capacity to consent to any form of sexual activity’.

The Police must be informed immediately of any sexual activity involving a child under 13 years of age.

The RBBC Safeguarding Policy has been developed in accordance with relevant guidance, participating in the Surrey wide governance over Children’s Safeguarding by contributing to the statutory Surrey Safeguarding Children’s Partnership by way of the District and Borough Forum

6. Safeguarding Adults

Definitions of Harm

For this policy, RBBC has defined harm to adults as:

Abuse can be something that is done to a person or omitted from being done. Abuse may consist of single or repeated acts and can be carried out by anyone, in any setting. It may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the individual. Abuse can include one or more of the following:

- **Physical:** This includes hitting, pinching, deliberately giving too much medication or physically restraining someone in an inappropriate way - for example, being locked in or force-fed.
- **Financial:** This includes taking another person's money or possessions - for example, having money or property stolen, being pressured into giving people money or changing a will, misuse of benefits, not being allowed access to money.
- **Sexual:** This includes any sexual act to which the vulnerable adult has not consented and may not understand. For example, being touched or kissed when it is not wanted, being made to touch or kiss someone else, being raped, being made to listen to sexual comments or forced to look at sexual acts or materials.
- **Psychological:** This can happen where someone is isolated, verbally abused or threatened.
- **Discrimination:** This includes racism, sexism or acts based on a person's disability, age or sexual orientation. It also includes other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment such as disability hate crime.
- **Organisational:** Neglect and poor care practice within a care setting such as a hospital or care home or in relation to care provided in someone's own home, ranging from one off incidents to ongoing ill-treatment. It can be neglect or poor practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within a care setting.
- **Neglect and Acts of Omission:** This includes ignoring or withholding physical or medical care needs. Examples are failing to provide appropriate food, shelter, heating, clothing, medical care, hygiene, personal care; inappropriate use of medication or over-medication.
- **Self-neglect:** Self-neglect covers a wide range of behaviour including neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and behaviour such as hoarding.
- **Abuse of individual rights / Discriminatory or Racial Abuse:** Abuse of individual rights is a violation of human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Discriminatory abuse consists of abusive or derisive attitudes or behaviour based on a person's sex, sexuality, ethnic origin, race, culture, age, disability or any other discriminatory abuse - this includes hate crime. Forced marriage is also an abuse of human rights and falls within the definition of adult abuse. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has issued draft guidance entitled 'Young people and vulnerable adults facing forced marriage – practice guidance for social workers'. Read more at www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage.

- **Professional:** Professional abuse is the misuse of therapeutic power and abuse of trust by professionals, the failure of professionals to act on suspected abuse/crimes, poor care practice or neglect in services, resource shortfalls or service pressures that lead to service failure and culpability as a result of poor management systems/structures. Examples of behaviour: entering into a sexual relationship with a patient/client.
- **Domestic:** The government defines domestic violence and abuse as 'any incidents or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, 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. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, sexual, financial or emotional abuse'. In addition, the Serious Crime Act 2015 includes a new offence of coercive and controlling behaviour which can impose a maximum sentence of 5 years imprisonment, a fine or both.
- **Modern Slavery:** Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude of the adult at risk.
- **Hate Crime:** Hate crime is where a crime is committed against a person specifically because of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious belief or sexual orientation. If an adult at risk is specifically targeted as a victim of crime this is a hate crime.
- **Mate Crime** is where someone befriends an adult at risk with the intention of exploiting or abusing them. The person often believes they are their 'friend' but will go on to be abused e.g financially, physically or psychologically.
- **Forced Marriage:** Forced Marriage is where one or both people do not or cannot consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to make sure the marriage takes place. Under the The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 Forced Marriage is now a criminal offence to force someone to marry; therefore the Police must always be contacted as quickly as possible.
- **Honour Based Violence:** Honour Based Violence is a crime; therefore if it is suspected or the person discloses abuse, the Police must always be contacted as quickly as possible. Honour Based Violence (or killing) is used by people who want to

defend the reputation of their family or community. It can also include enforced isolation from their community.

- **FGM (Female Genital Mutilation):** FGM involves procedures that involve total or partial removal of the female external genitalia or other injury to the female genitalia for non-medical reasons.
- **Terrorism (Prevent)** Terrorism is an action or threat designed to influence the government or intimidate the public. Its purpose is to advance a political, religious or ideological cause. People can be at risk of being drawn into terrorism due to their vulnerabilities, associations or ideology.

7. Good Practice when working with adults and children

Provision of activities

Activities which you are organising must adhere to all good practice standards across a wide range of areas. These include recruitment of activity leaders; DBS checking; staffing ratios; suitability of premises; health and safety arrangements; and facilities for children with special needs. Your line manager will be able to support this if you are unsure.

Photography

Where taking and publishing images, (including video) - including for use on a website or social media channel - is part of your role, you should ensure that you have discussed the publication of any images in advance with your line manager, and where appropriate, with your team communications lead. It may be necessary for you to get explicit, written consent from the subject and/or their parent/guardian.

Transport

Do not take children alone on car/bus/rail journeys unless it is part of your specific job role to do so and your Line manager has given approval.

Professional conduct

The way you conduct yourself and interact with people is critical for your – and our – reputation. You should consider how your actions might appear to others, and avoid:

- having discreet or private contact with residents;
- becoming personally involved with situations or people;
- physical touch

Allegations

All safeguarding allegations made against RBBC staff and/or volunteers will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Any breach of requirements relating to safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults has the potential to be considered as a matter of Gross Misconduct. Such allegation(s) will be investigated in line with the Disciplinary Policy. Guidance from the Human Resources Team will be identified support the identified Investigation Officer in line with the disciplinary policy. All staff in whatever capacity will be made aware of these procedures during induction or training sessions.

Whistle blowing

RBBC has a [Whistle-blowing Policy](#) (See Council Intranet) that has been developed to assist and support members of staff and volunteers in reporting concerns about the behaviour of other staff.

8. Organisational Safeguarding Responsibilities

RBBC are responsible for the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and have a Safeguarding Lead officer to manage the Safeguarding Policy and its implementation. It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead and Officers to take appropriate action following any expression of concern and make referrals to the appropriate agency.

RBBC will ensure that the designated Safeguarding Lead participates in regular safeguarding training on an annual basis so that they are aware of the procedures of identifying and reporting suspected cases of abuse and neglect and are up to date with any legal changes.

All staff, volunteers and councillors will be made aware of this Safeguarding Policy and related relevant procedures as part of their induction and their contract.

All staff will be informed and have access to regular training as required to update their knowledge on safeguarding. More information can be found here:

[Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership \(surreyscp.org.uk\)](http://surreyscp.org.uk)

[Homepage - Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board \(surreysab.org.uk\)](http://surreysab.org.uk)

Safeguarding Lead Responsibilities

RBBC will ensure that all members of staff and volunteers have timely and relevant safeguarding training.

Training for staff can be accessed from the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Surrey Adults Safeguarding Board. Staff and volunteers can also access a range of multi-agency safeguarding training. More information can be found here;

[Surrey Children's Services Academy \(SCSA\) - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](http://surreycc.gov.uk)

<https://www.surreysab.org.uk/training/>

The Safeguarding Lead and officers will give appropriate advice and support staff to act following any expression of concern, disclosure or reported incident and make referrals to the appropriate agency.

Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities

Any new member of staff or volunteer with direct contact with people will be taken through this safeguarding policy as part of the induction process and offered training soon after commencing their post.

All staff have a duty to ensure that any suspected incident, allegation or other manifestation relating to child protection is reported using the procedures detailed in this policy.

If in any doubt about what action to take, employees must seek advice from one of the named Safeguarding Officers.

9. Training

RBBC provides a combination of essential and optional training for staff, delivered during induction and at regular intervals thereafter. Training requirements are tailored to different staff groups based on the nature and frequency of their interactions with residents. Managers are responsible for informing staff about relevant training opportunities, including when these need to be completed and the expected timelines. Attendance at training courses is a shared responsibility between managers and employees. Course availability may be updated or amended at the Council's discretion.

This safeguarding guidance is intended to be viewed alongside the Safeguarding Policy. This policy was last reviewed on:

Date:.....

Signed:...