

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

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Author(s): Dedicated Safeguarding Lead

1. Our policy statement

- 1.1. **Purpose:** Sage Homes is dedicated to keeping children and young people safe. This policy provides guidance to help identify and manage safeguarding concerns, ensuring appropriate actions to protect individuals from harm.
- 1.2. **Commitment:** safeguarding is a fundamental responsibility of everyone at Sage Homes. We expect every colleague and partner to uphold this commitment to child protection and welfare.

2. Key principles

- 2.1. **Awareness:** recognise indicators of abuse and neglect.
- 2.2. **Reporting:** report safeguarding concerns to the appropriate person or authority promptly.
- 2.3. **Action:** take necessary actions to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people.

3. The scope of this policy

- 3.1. This policy applies to all Sage Homes colleagues, including fixed-term contractors, Board members, agency workers, consultants, volunteers, and external partners providing services to Sage Homes and its customers.

4. Objectives

- 4.1. This policy establishes a clear framework to:
 - **Protect and Empower:** safeguard children and young people by promoting awareness and access to reporting channels.
 - **Define Responsibilities:** clarify roles in identifying, reporting, and preventing abuse.
 - **Support Collaboration:** work with external partners to reinforce safeguarding practices.
 - **Provide Training:** offer training and resources to ensure colleagues can respond effectively to concerns.
 - **Monitor and Improve:** maintain effective governance, review practices regularly, and strive for continuous improvement.

5. Context

- 5.1. Sage Homes engages with children and young people as part of its daily operations and collaborates with local authorities to meet safeguarding obligations

6. Associated frameworks

- 6.1. Relevant legislation includes the Children Act 2004 and guidance on multiagency

safeguarding from **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023**. Sage Homes, while not a statutory agency, is committed to adhering to this framework.

7. Definitions

- 7.1. Sage Homes uses the following definitions to ensure clarity in safeguarding:
- 7.1.1. **Child safeguarding**: measures to protect children from harm, promote their health and development, and ensure positive outcomes.
 - 7.1.2. **Equality and diversity**: Commitment to making services accessible to all customers and providing training for effective communication. We treat everyone fairly, promote equal opportunities, and prevent discrimination based on protected characteristics. Documents are available in multiple languages and formats upon request.
 - 7.1.3. **Child**: an individual under 18 years old, including unborn children.
 - 7.1.4. **Parent or guardian**: a person with the legal right to make decisions for a child, including carers and guardians..
 - 7.1.5. **Abuse and neglect**: harmful actions or failures to act that affect a child's wellbeing. This includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological abuse, and neglect. Employees are trained to recognise these types and identify risks like online abuse and domestic violence.

8. Roles and responsibilities

- 8.1. Specific roles ensure effective safeguarding implementation:
- 8.1.1. **Dedicated Sage Safeguarding Lead (DSSL)**: oversees safeguarding across services.
 - 8.1.2. **Director of Assets and Operation (DAO)**: holds strategic oversight.
 - 8.1.3. **Board Safeguarding Champion (BSC)**: ensures safeguarding is integrated into organisational risk and planning.
 - 8.1.4. **Safeguarding Champions (SC)**: departmental support for safeguarding concerns.
 - 8.1.5. **Customer-facing colleagues (CFC)**: front-line identification and reporting of concerns.
 - 8.1.6. Roles and responsibilities table:

Responsibility	BSC	DAO	DSSL	SC	CFC
Will complete relevant training every two years	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensures organisational risk considerations include safeguarding	✓	✓			
Supports leaders with specific safeguarding responsibilities	✓	✓			
Fully understands and implements the	✓	✓	✓		

safeguarding policy					
Reports to the Executive Team and Board		✓			
Owns and maintains the central safeguarding log		✓			
Holds reviews and updates of safeguarding policies and procedures			✓		
Co-chairs the Safeguarding Committee		✓	✓		
Maintains operational overview and supports Safeguarding Champions			✓		
Will review safeguarding activities and ensure policy implementation			✓		
Be present in each department and contribute updates to Safeguarding Committee meetings		✓	✓	✓	
Supports all colleagues across the organisation			✓	✓	
Ensures adequate resources for safeguarding practices			✓	✓	
Leads on reviews for internal safeguarding matters			✓		
Oversees safeguarding training and compliance			✓		
Records and assesses safeguarding concerns			✓	✓	✓
Reports concerns to Safeguarding Champion/Line Manager/Safeguarding lead			✓	✓	✓
Makes safeguarding referrals promptly, maintains accurate records of concerns and actions taken			✓	✓	✓
Represents Sage Homes in multiagency meetings if needed			✓	✓	✓

9. Training, recruitment and support for employees

- 9.1. Sage Homes commits to ongoing safeguarding training, following a competency framework, with refreshers every two years for employees.
- 9.2. Recruitment follows safer practices, ensuring that relevant roles undergo DBS checks and safeguarding training as part of induction.

10. Working with contractors, agents, and third-party partners

- 10.1. Contractors and third parties must ensure personnel meet safeguarding standards and are prepared to report concerns as outlined by Sage Homes.

11. Confidentiality and information sharing

- 11.1. Sage Homes will share information with statutory partners in compliance with Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.
- 11.2. Training will ensure employees understand data protection in safeguarding..

12. Working with external partners and statutory agencies

- 12.1. Sage Homes will work with statutory partners, adhere to Section 42 obligations, and participate in multi-agency safeguarding efforts as required.

13. Key legislation

- 13.1. All The relevant legislation guiding safeguarding efforts includes, but is not limited to:
 - Care Act 2014
 - Data Protection Act 2018
 - Crime and Disorder Act 1998
 - Mental Capacity Act 2005, among others.

14. Equality and diversity

- 14.1. Sage is committed to making sure all services are accessible to all our customers. Our employees will be trained to make sure they are communicating appropriately with our customers, and they have the relevant information.
- 14.2. This policy will be applied in a way which makes sure we treat all customers with fairness and respect. We recognise our duty to advance equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination or victimisation on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and any other protected characteristic defined within the [Equality Act 2010](#).
- 14.3. On request we will provide translations of all our documents, policies and procedures in various languages and formats including braille and large print.

15. Policy delivery and related documents

- 15.1. Policy delivery is supported through the CRM Safeguarding Process, off-system referral route, and case review process, which collectively ensure robust safeguarding practices across all interactions.
- 15.2. A suite of supporting documents provides comprehensive guidance and aligns with this policy. For detailed reference, employees should consult these documents to fully understand safeguarding requirements and operational procedures. Key areas covered include:
 - Safeguarding legislation and frameworks for children and adult

- Guidance on types and definitions of abuse
- Safeguarding governance, committee structure, and reporting procedures
- Health and safety, data protection, and whistleblowing practices
- Policies on relevant issues such as domestic abuse, antisocial behaviour, and modern slavery

15.3. Access to these documents is available through the internal policy library and should be reviewed in conjunction with this policy to ensure adherence to safeguarding standards.

15.4. The effective delivery of this policy including training, guidance and support required by employees for implementation of this policy will be provided by the Learning & Development Team and Sage Dedicated Safeguarding Lead as and when required.

16. Policy review

16.1. We will review this policy every three years to make sure it meets our aims and continues to be relevant and accurate.

16.2. The policy will be reviewed sooner if:

- Legislation/ regulation or industry changes require it.
- We identify any problems or failures in this policy as a result of customer or stakeholder feedback, complaints or findings from any independent organisations.
- Recommendations are made following investigations into significant incidents.

Version	Checked by	Amendments	Approved at/by	Date of Approval	Published by	Date of Review
1.0	Head of Resident Services	Separation of policies relating to Adults and Children	Board	Dec 24	Policy & Service Improvement	Dec 27