

PROCEDURE:

Responding to a Safeguarding Concern about an Adults at Risk

Table of Contents

| | |
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| 1.0 Purpose and scope of this procedure..... | 2 |
| 2.0 Glossary of terms | 2 |
| 3.0 Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse..... | 4 |
| 4.0 Responding to concerns | 4 |
| 5.0 How to report your safeguarding concerns | 6 |
| 6.0 Who to contact if you have a safeguarding concern..... | 7 |
| 7.0 Reporting flow diagram | 9 |
| 8.0 How to record your concerns | 10 |
| 9.0 Making an allegation against a colleague, volunteer, or partner..... | 10 |
| 10.0 Supporting staff following a safeguarding incident..... | 11 |

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1.0 Purpose and scope of this procedure

The Blaggrave Trust and its employees are committed to keeping adults at risk safe from harm. Our full [Safeguarding Policy](#) can be found on our website or by request.

This policy relates to the safeguarding of adults at risk.

Adults at risk are defined as individuals aged over 18 who:

- **Have needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and**
- **is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and**
- **as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.**

– **The Care Act 2014**

This procedure aims to:

- Provide clear guidance on how to report concerns about the safety of an adult at risk – be that a member of a non-constituted group or collective that sit under our safeguarding policies, or the adults they may support through a youth-led funded project.
- Identify key contact details for reporting both concerns within Blaggrave, and to relevant external organisations.
- Support staff, volunteers, and individual grantees at Blaggrave to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse.

This procedure applies to anyone working on behalf of The Trust, including senior managers, trustees, paid staff, volunteers, freelance contracted staff, non-constituted groups / collectives, and work experience students.

It's important to remember that it is not your role nor responsibility to determine if something is abuse, and you should avoid any form of investigation. Your responsibility requires you only to recognise, respond, record, and report any concerns of abuse to the relevant safeguarding team named within this procedure. **This procedure will take you through that process step by step.**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

2.0 Glossary of terms

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| Vulnerable Adult | An older term under the Care Act 2014 that has now been replaced with 'Adult at Risk' (see below). |
| Adult at risk | A person 18 years and over, where safeguarding duties apply, that meets the following criteria: |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) • is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect. • as a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect. |
| Young adult | Any person between the ages of 18 years and 30. |
| Children | As per the Children Act 2004, this is a legal term that refers to all those who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. Duty of care for this group may include those referred to or accessing any activity or project delivered by The Trust or through that delivered by individual grantees who operate under The Trust's safeguarding policy and procedures. |
| Adviser | A person 18 years or older that is paid on a freelance basis by The Trust to provide expertise in specific youth-focused programs. These individuals are usually part of a group of advisers who are facilitated by an externally contracted facilitator. |
| Non-constituted individuals / collectives | A young adult or a collective of young adults who have received a grant from The Trust and whose funded work is not supported nor affiliated in any way with a charity or regulated body outside of The Trust. This person will most likely operate under The Trust's safeguarding policies and procedures, including this one. |
| Delivery partner | A group, individual or organisation that has received a grant from The Trust. |
| Staff | A paid individual with either an employment or freelance contract with Blaggrave (this does not include 'young advisors'). |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) | A role and person within the organisation who has ultimate responsibility for operational safeguarding processes and procedures. |
| Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) | Roles of one or more individuals within the organisation who supports the DSL, in a deputised role, to carry out their safeguarding duties. |
| Trustee Safeguarding Lead (TSL) | A role and person on the trustee board who is responsible for ensuring organisational compliance to legislation and external regulators. |
| Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) | A government service that helps employers make safer recruitment decisions. |
| The Trust / Blaggrave | The Blaggrave Trust |

3.0 Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse

Safeguarding adults means protecting an adult at risk's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop the risks and experience of abuse or neglect (including self-neglect). At the same time, it is making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted. This includes, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear, or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

Blaggrave will not be limited in its view of what constitutes abuse or neglect, as they can take many forms and the circumstances of an individual case will always be considered. The Trust supports the [Making Safeguarding Personal](#) initiative for adult safeguarding.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody, or an organisation, may cause or neglect a person by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Individuals may be abused in a family, or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by another adult, or adults, or a person under the age of 18.

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance (2020) identifies and gives further information for 10 types of abuse that adults may suffer, these are:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Neglect or acts of omission
- Self-neglect

As mentioned above, adults may also in effect abuse themselves through self-neglect. Examples of this might be hoarding, chronic self-harm, or suicidal ideation. In relation to these, as with all others, there is no requirement to be an expert in mental health or investigate your concerns, rather if you have a concern relating to an adult's wellbeing your duty is to recognise, respond, report and record, following the processes laid out in this procedure.

4.0 Responding to concerns

All staff and volunteers, and The Blaggrave Trust as a charity, have a duty to ensure that

all concerns and disclosures are followed up. This will include:

- If an adult describes abuse, being suffered by themselves or another individual (disclosure);
- If you see or hear something that concerns you about the possibility of abuse;
- If a third party tells you something about suspected abuse.

In the case of a disclosure do:

- Take it seriously
- Listen and reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Report what they have said as soon as possible using the [safeguarding reporting form](#) (within 12 hours), and use their exact words – do not try and correct anything
- Ask only open questions, e.g. “when did this happen?”
- Ask the person what they would like to happen next
- Let the adult know you will have to tell a DSO/DSL at Blaggrave, the DSO/DSL will then discuss with them their wishes and how or if this information is shared externally. In most cases, the adult will be able to decide what happens with the information.
- Call the DSO/DSL directly if you feel the concern is urgent on 07713 643 209.
- Get support for yourself following the disclosure

Positive things to say:

- “I am glad you told me”
- “I am sorry this has happened”
- “It is not your fault”
- “We can do something about this together, what would you like to happen next?”

Things not to do:

- Assume someone else will act or already knows
- Promise to keep it a secret as the disclosure must be shared with a DSO/DSL
- Interrupt or ask leading questions, e.g. “did your partner do that to you?”
- Express disbelief in what you are being told
- Seem to judge or shame the adult, e.g. “why didn't you mention this before?”
- Discuss the incident with other staff or volunteers not directly involved in the incident, except the DSO/DSL

There is a remote possibility that an individual 18 or over may announce that they do not want to go home because they are frightened of abuse. We cannot legally prevent an adult from going home. However, you can insist on calling the police (with the adult's consent) and staying with them. If you suspect that an offence may be about to be committed (e.g. their partner has arrived drunk and aggressive) you do not need the adults consent here to call 999. Equally you may choose to call for an ambulance if the adult is at immediate risk of harm to themselves (e.g. suicide). A DSO/DSL in both instances should be informed as soon as possible.

5.0 How to report your safeguarding concerns

If you have concerns about an adult or they tell you they are experiencing abuse it is important to have regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs. They may not wish nor give consent for information to be shared (externally from the Blaggrave safeguarding team). In this instance, you should respect this wish but let them know that you will still need to let a named DSO/DSL at Blaggrave know. The DSO/DSL will then speak to them about their wishes and what The Trust can do to further support them.

It is also important to understand when safeguarding adults at risk the wider context such as whether others may be at risk of abuse, namely children or other adults at risk. Information such as this may influence later decisions by the DSO/DSL in terms of sharing information externally.

The flow diagram below provides a quick reference point for all staff to follow in the instance of a safeguarding concern. When applying this procedure note that all reports to DSO's or the DSL should be followed up in writing using the [safeguarding incident reporting form](#).

Details of safeguarding concerns should not be shared with team leaders or line managers, unless:

- It is in the interests of the adult to do so before reporting/speaking with the DSO/DSL – for example any delay in sharing concerns may result in the immediate significant harm of that adult at risk
- You are instructed to do so by your DSO/DSL

You may of course let a team leader, line manager or other colleagues know that you need to make a safeguarding report, but details of the report should remain confidential. If you are uncertain if your concern is of a safeguarding nature, you can always contact the safeguarding team who will guide you through this procedure.

6.0 Who to contact if you have a safeguarding concern

The Trust has appointed individuals who are responsible for leading safeguarding across the organisation. Within the Blaggrave Safeguarding Team, the DSL will hold overall responsibility for safeguarding processes and procedures and should be contacted directly for more serious, or whistleblowing, concerns. All other safeguarding concerns should in the first instance be reported to a named DSO.

All DSOs within Blaggrave will share safeguarding concerns with the DSL for central storage of information and oversight.

- **DSL** – Valeria Tavares – valeria@blagravetrust.org (07713 643 209)
- **DSO** – Rochell Rowe – rochell.rowe@blagravetrust.org (07565 228 517)

In the unlikely event that the safeguarding team as above are uncontactable, or a concern raised is regarding the DSL or the CEO, then the TSL should be the first point of contact:

- **TSL** – Clare Cannock – tsl@blagravetrust.org

A summarised list of the roles and responsibilities of the DSL/DSO are available within the relevant 'DSO/DSL job description', which can be requested at any time from a Blaggrave staff member.

'Organisations should always promote the adult's wellbeing in their safeguarding arrangements. People have complex lives and being safe is only one of the things they want for themselves. Professionals should work with the adult to establish what being safe means to them and how that can be best achieved. Professionals and other staff should not be advocating 'safety' measures that do not take account of individual wellbeing.'

- **Section 1, Care Act 2014**

The contact details below should be used by the safeguarding team for reporting concerns to adult services. Please note each local authority has its own processes and procedures for reporting concerns and so may look and feel slightly different.



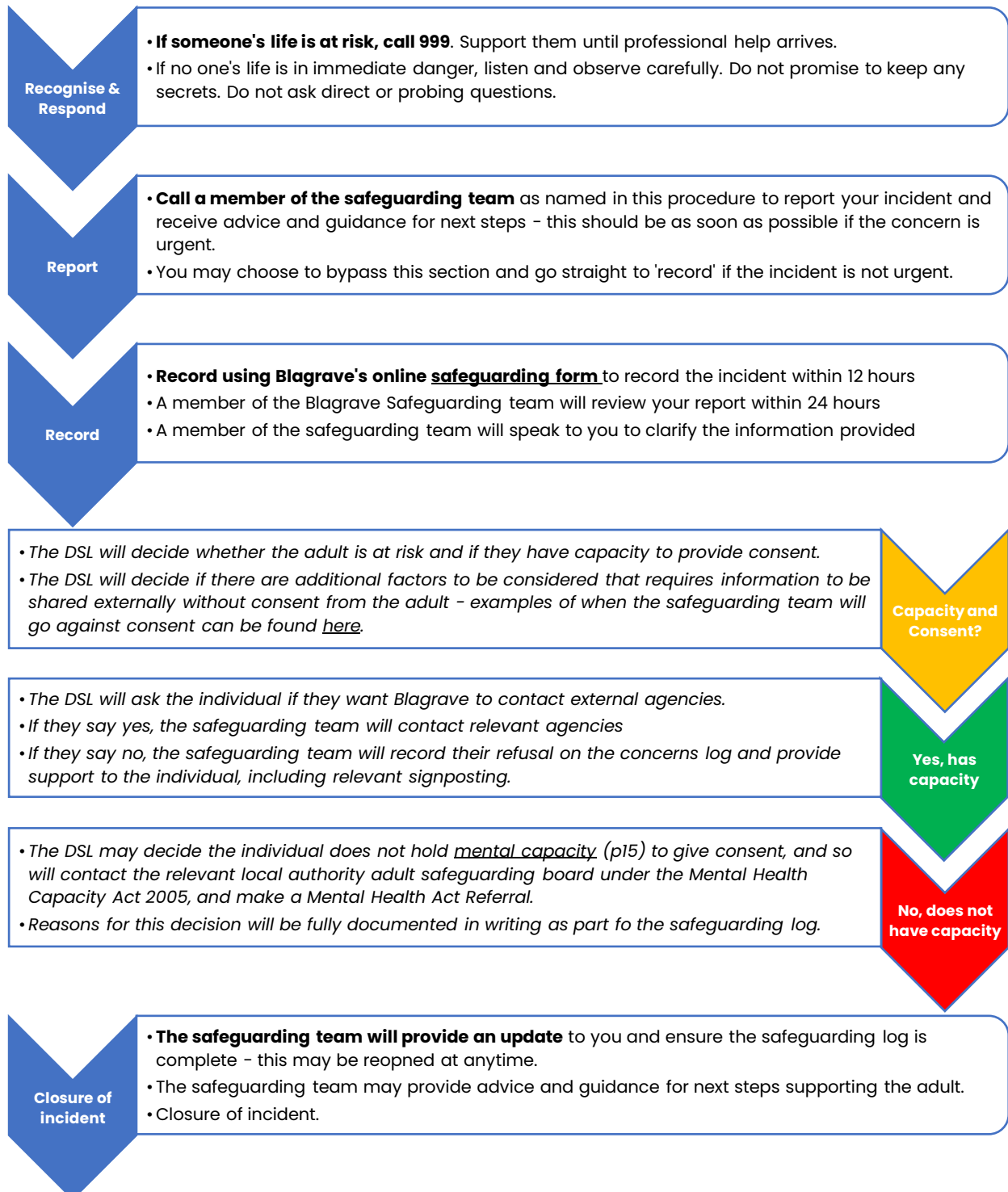
Details for local authority safeguarding adult boards can be found by scanning this QR code, or by clicking [here](#).

In the event any delay might cause additional significant harm to an adult, or child, the police should be called immediately on 999. Where an adult may not be deemed at risk but has experienced some form of abuse (e.g. physical assault) then this may be treated as a criminal act and a report made by the adult to the police. Where the adult does not wish to call the police, but the assault was alleged to be perpetrated by a member of staff

or volunteer of Blagrove or a funded project, then Blagrove's whistleblowing processes should be followed.

7.0 Reporting flow diagram

All sections highlighted in **blue** indicate your role within the reporting process, those on the right-hand side relate to the actions of the safeguarding team at Blaggrave.



8.0 How to record your concerns

All recorded safeguarding information should be factual and not based on opinions; record what the person tells you or what you have seen, and indicate any witnesses, if appropriate. This should always be completed by the person reporting the concern and done within 12 hours of the incident to support accurate recall. It is recommended when completing the form to write in the third person, i.e., use of initials to identify self and individuals concerned. This often removes personal emotion and opinions from reporting.



The safeguarding concern form is available electronically by scanning this QR code or via this [link](#). Guidance for completion is available in the form's introduction.

The information that is recorded will be kept secure and held within encrypted files, compliant to General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

9.0 Making an allegation against a colleague, volunteer, or partner

If you are reading this section because your safeguarding concern is regarding the conduct towards an adult by a member of staff, volunteer, or member of non-constituted group or collective that sit under Blaggrave's safeguarding policies, you should refer to Blaggrave's '[Whistleblowing Policy](#)' which will give you a clear understanding of what to do next. In brief, the below outlines examples of conduct and roles held by individuals that may result in a whistleblowing allegation. This list, however, is not exhaustive.

Circumstances in which staff may 'Whistleblow':

- Behaviour or conduct in their personal life that might indicate unsuitability to work with adults at risk (e.g., domestic abuse or assault against another adult).
- Behaviour that has harmed or may have harmed a child or adult at risk.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or adult at risk.

These whistleblowing concerns may relate to colleagues who:

- Work directly with adults at risk
- Work in a setting where adults at risk regard them as safe and trustworthy.
- Have access to sensitive information regarding adults at risk.
- May themselves self-classify as an adult at risk, e.g., individual grantees running projects funded by Blaggrave.
- Are senior managers or trustees who have responsibility for appointing people to work with children or adults at risk.

If you were involved in an incident could give rise to a concern, including the potential for misinterpretation by others, you are strongly advised to self-report the incident directly to the DSL. The DSL will then handle the matter in a fair, neutral, and timely manner.

Concerns related to the conduct towards adults at risk by staff members of delivery partner organisations should be raised directly with the delivery partner according to their policies.

10.0 Supporting staff following a safeguarding incident

We recognise how personally distressing it can be following an observation or disclosure of potential abuse. We encourage you, where you may feel comfortable and able to do so, to speak with your line manager who will be best placed to explore with you what emotional support may be available, for example, via the Employee Assistance Programme.