

Safeguarding Policy

ADULTS AT RISK

Policy Owner	Board of Trustees
Version	1.0
Effective Date	2026
Next Review Date	2027
Designated Safeguarding Leads	Julie Khan-Muhammad / Nazmul Khan

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Birmingham Adult Safeguarding: 0121 303 1234 | Solihull Adult Safeguarding: 0121 704 8007 / Emergency: 999 | Police (non emergency): 101

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1 Policy Statement

The Safeguarding of all vulnerable adults, children and young people accessing the services of Unique Minds is of utmost importance to the Board of Trustees.

This policy applies to all staff, trustees, volunteers, agency staff and students or anyone working on behalf of Unique Minds.

The guidance given in this policy is based on the following principles:

- ✓ Creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all adults, children and young people
- ✓ All adults, children and young people regardless of age, ability, disability, gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status have the right to be protected from abuse and poor practice and to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.

- ✓ Unique Minds will seek to ensure that our services are inclusive and make reasonable adjustments for any ability, disability or impairment. We will also commit to continuous development monitoring and review.
- ✓ Embedding safeguarding into every aspect of our practice
- ✓ Actively promoting the empowerment and wellbeing of vulnerable adults through sensitive and responsive service provision.
- ✓ Supporting the independence and self determination of the individual, including the recognition that such a right can involve risk, which is understood by all concerned and which is minimised wherever possible.
- ✓ Ensuring the safety of vulnerable adults through strict adherence to the guidelines below, through applying integrated partnership strategies of the local authority and through the provision of training and support to all staff and trustees working for Unique Minds
- ✓ Protect children and young people who support or partake in services; this includes children of adults who access our services
- ✓ Ensuring that the law and statutory requirements which relate to the vulnerable adults are known and put into practice, when required.
- ✓ Provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection

A child, young person or adult should never experience abuse of any kind. The welfare of the child, young person or adult is paramount. All allegations will be taken seriously and responded to quickly. Unique Minds recognises that ability and disability can change over time, such that some adults, children and young people may be additionally vulnerable to abuse, particularly those adults with care and support needs. Some children, young people and adults may be additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues. Unique Minds recognises the role and responsibilities of statutory agencies in safeguarding adults and is committed to complying with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Adults Boards. Working in partnership with children, young people, parents/carers, adults, families, and other agencies is essential in promoting that person's welfare.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

2 Purpose

This policy establishes a comprehensive framework for safeguarding adults at risk within Unique Minds, ensuring that all individuals accessing services are protected from abuse, harm, and neglect. It sets out the organisation's commitment to promoting wellbeing, maintaining dignity, and enabling individuals to live as independently as possible while recognising that risk may be present and must be appropriately managed.

This document ensures compliance with the Care Act 2014 and relevant safeguarding legislation, and provides staff, volunteers, and trustees with clear guidance on recognising, responding to, and reporting safeguarding concerns in a consistent and effective manner.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all staff, trustees, volunteers, contractors, and any individual working on behalf of Unique Minds. It covers all activities delivered within the centre, outreach services, and any engagement with individuals, families, or carers.

It applies to all adults who access or are referred to the Wayfinder service, including those living with dementia and associated vulnerabilities, as well as carers and family members where safeguarding concerns may arise.

4 Procedure

All staff and volunteers must remain vigilant to the signs of abuse and take immediate and appropriate action where concerns arise. Safeguarding concerns may be identified through observation, direct disclosure, or information received from third parties.

When a concern is identified, the individual's immediate safety must be prioritised. If there is an imminent risk of harm or a crime has been committed, emergency services must be contacted without delay.

All safeguarding concerns must be reported to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible. Staff must not delay reporting to gather additional information or attempt to investigate the matter themselves.

A written record of the concern must be completed within 24 hours, including clear and factual details of what has been observed or disclosed. Records must distinguish between fact, opinion, and allegation, and wherever possible, the individual's own words should be recorded.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the concern, consult with relevant agencies where appropriate, and determine whether a referral to the local authority safeguarding team is required. All decisions and actions must be clearly documented.

Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the process, with information shared strictly on a need-to-know basis, in line with UK GDPR and data protection legislation.

Safeguarding is an ongoing process. Appropriate follow up actions must be taken to ensure the individual remains safe and supported.

5 Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that effective safeguarding systems, policies, and procedures are in place and that the organisation complies with all relevant legislation.

Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for managing safeguarding concerns, liaising with statutory agencies, maintaining records, and ensuring appropriate action is taken.

Managers are responsible for ensuring staff are trained, supervised, and supported in safeguarding responsibilities.

All staff and volunteers are responsible for recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns and must always adhere to this policy.

Compliance, Monitoring and Review

The policy will be monitored through regular review, supervision, and incident analysis to ensure effectiveness and continuous improvement.

Reporting

Safeguarding concerns will be reported internally and externally as required, including to local authorities and relevant safeguarding boards.

Records Management

All safeguarding records must be securely stored and managed in accordance with UK GDPR requirements.

Safer Recruitment and Staff Safety

The organisation is responsible for ensuring that robust recruitment, selection, and vetting procedures are in place to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with vulnerable adults, children, and young people. This includes appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and adherence to safer recruitment practices.

The organisation will take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of staff and volunteers, particularly when working in situations where there may be a risk of harm or aggression.

Training Responsibilities

All staff, volunteers, and trustees must receive appropriate safeguarding training to enable them to carry out their roles effectively.

Training will include:

- ✓ Recognising signs and indicators of abuse
- ✓ Understanding different types of abuse
- ✓ How to respond to disclosures
- ✓ Reporting procedures and escalation pathways
- ✓ Record keeping and confidentiality
- ✓ Working within professional boundaries

Safeguarding training will be mandatory and provided at induction, with regular updates and refresher training to ensure knowledge remains current.

Managers and Designated Safeguarding Leads will receive additional, role specific training, including risk assessment, inter agency working, and safeguarding decision making.

Safeguarding training is an ongoing responsibility, and staff will be supported through supervision, appraisal, and continuous professional development.

Safer Recruitment, Vetting and Monitoring

Unique Minds is committed to ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and individuals working on behalf of the organisation are suitable to work with vulnerable adults, children, and young people.

Robust recruitment and selection procedures will be followed to safeguard those accessing services. This includes:

- ✓ Clear role descriptions and person specifications
- ✓ Structured interviews and appropriate selection processes
- ✓ Verification of identity and right to work
- ✓ Obtaining and checking references
- ✓ Assessment of suitability for the role

All staff and volunteers will undergo appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks in line with their role and level of contact with vulnerable individuals.

No individual will commence work until all required pre employment checks have been satisfactorily completed.

Supervision and Support

Managers are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding is embedded within regular supervision and that staff have opportunities to discuss concerns, reflect on practice, and receive guidance.

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Additional Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for ensuring they remain up to date with local safeguarding procedures and guidance, including those of the local authority and safeguarding partnerships.

They will maintain effective working relationships with relevant external agencies and ensure that safeguarding concerns are managed in line with local multi agency procedures.

Ongoing Monitoring and Suitability

Safeguarding is a continuous responsibility, and the organisation will ensure that the suitability of staff and volunteers is monitored on an ongoing basis.

This includes:

- ✓ Regular supervision and safeguarding discussions
- ✓ Annual appraisals and performance reviews

- ✓ Ongoing safeguarding training and updates
- ✓ Monitoring of conduct and professional boundaries
- ✓ Prompt action where concerns arise regarding behaviour or practice

Where concerns are identified about an individual's suitability to work with vulnerable people, appropriate action will be taken, which may include suspension, investigation, and referral to relevant authorities where necessary.

Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

Any allegations or concerns regarding the behaviour of a staff member or volunteer must be taken seriously and reported immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Lead or senior manager.

Appropriate procedures will be followed to ensure that:

- ✓ The individual at risk is protected
- ✓ The allegation is investigated in line with safeguarding procedures
- ✓ Relevant external agencies are informed where required

6 Definitions

Adult at Risk

An adult at risk is any person aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support and is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves.

Abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts and can take many forms.

Types of abuse include:

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

Safeguarding

Safeguarding refers to the actions taken to protect an individual's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

7 Related Legislation and Documents

This policy is underpinned by relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to:

- ✓ Care Act 2014
- ✓ Mental Capacity Act 2005
- ✓ Human Rights Act 1998
- ✓ Data Protection Act 2018
- ✓ Children Act 1989
- ✓ Children Act 2004

This policy should be read in conjunction with other organisational policies, including:

- ✓ Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy
- ✓ Whistleblowing Policy
- ✓ Equality and Diversity Policy
- ✓ Health and Safety Policy
- ✓ Complaints Policy

8 Feedback

Unique Minds is committed to continuous improvement in safeguarding practice. Feedback on this policy and its implementation is welcomed from staff, volunteers, service users, carers, and partner organisations.

Feedback can be provided through supervision, team meetings, or directly to Unique Minds management and will be used to inform future reviews, ongoing development, and improvements in safeguarding practice.

9 Approval and Review Details

This policy will be formally reviewed on an annual basis, or sooner if there are changes in legislation, guidance, or organisational practice.

Version control will be maintained to ensure that the most up to date policy is in use at all times.

Policy Name	Safeguarding Policy
Organisation	Unique Minds
Policy Owner	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Approved By	Board of Trustees
Date Approved	
Review Frequency	Annually or as required
Next Review Date	[Insert Date]
Version Number	[Insert Version]
Last Updated	5th May 2026

10 Appendix

Appendix 1: Types of Abuse

Type of Abuse	Description	Possible Indicators
Physical Abuse	The use of physical force that may result in injury, pain, or impairment.	Unexplained injuries, bruising, burns, fractures, fear of certain individuals, flinching, inconsistent explanations.
Psychological / Emotional Abuse	Actions that harm an individual's emotional wellbeing or sense of self worth.	Withdrawal, anxiety, low self esteem, fearfulness, changes in behaviour, reluctance to engage.
Sexual Abuse	Any sexual activity that the individual has not consented to or cannot consent to.	Bruising in intimate areas, changes in behaviour, inappropriate sexualised behaviour, distress, withdrawal.
Financial / Material Abuse	The misuse or theft of an individual's money, property, or belongings.	Unexplained withdrawals, missing possessions, sudden financial difficulties, changes in spending patterns.
Neglect and Acts of Omission	Failure to meet basic physical, emotional, or medical needs.	Poor hygiene, malnutrition, untreated medical conditions, unsafe living conditions, lack of support.
Self Neglect	Behaviour where an individual fails to care for their own basic needs.	Poor personal hygiene, hoarding, neglecting health needs, living in unsafe environments.
	Abuse based on a person's race, gender, disability, religion, sexual	

Type of Abuse	Description	Possible Indicators
Discriminatory Abuse	orientation, or other protected characteristic.	Harassment, slurs, exclusion, unequal treatment, signs of distress linked to identity.
Domestic Abuse	Abuse occurring within a relationship or family setting, including coercive control.	Fear of a partner or family member, controlling behaviour, isolation, physical injuries, emotional distress.
Modern Slavery	Exploitation through forced labour, servitude, or human trafficking.	Unusual working conditions, lack of freedom, signs of control, poor living conditions, fearfulness.
Organisational Abuse	Poor care practices or systemic abuse within a service or organisation.	Lack of dignity, rigid routines, neglect of needs, unsafe practices, complaints about care.

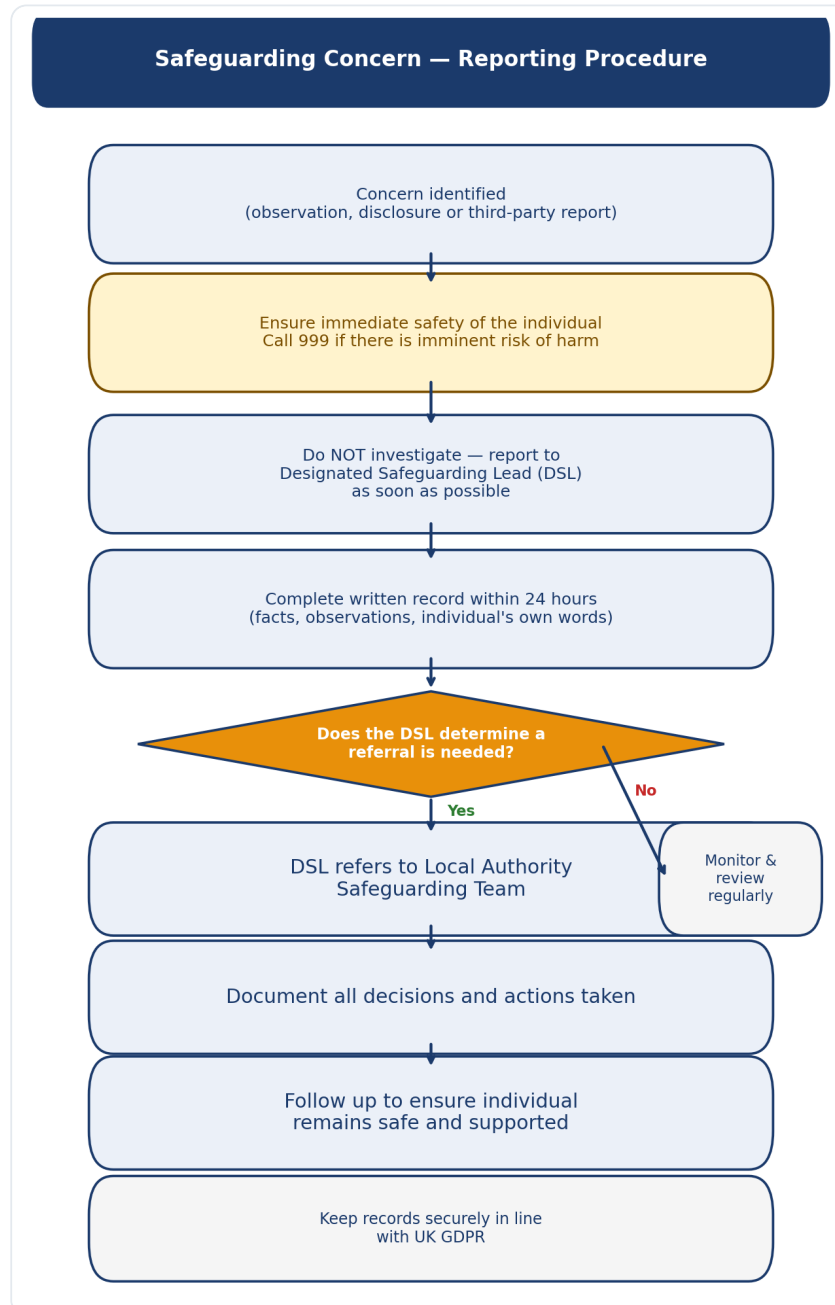
Appendix 2: Possible Signs and Indicators of Abuse

Abuse may not always be obvious, and individuals may not disclose concerns directly. Staff and volunteers should remain alert to changes in behaviour, appearance, or circumstances.

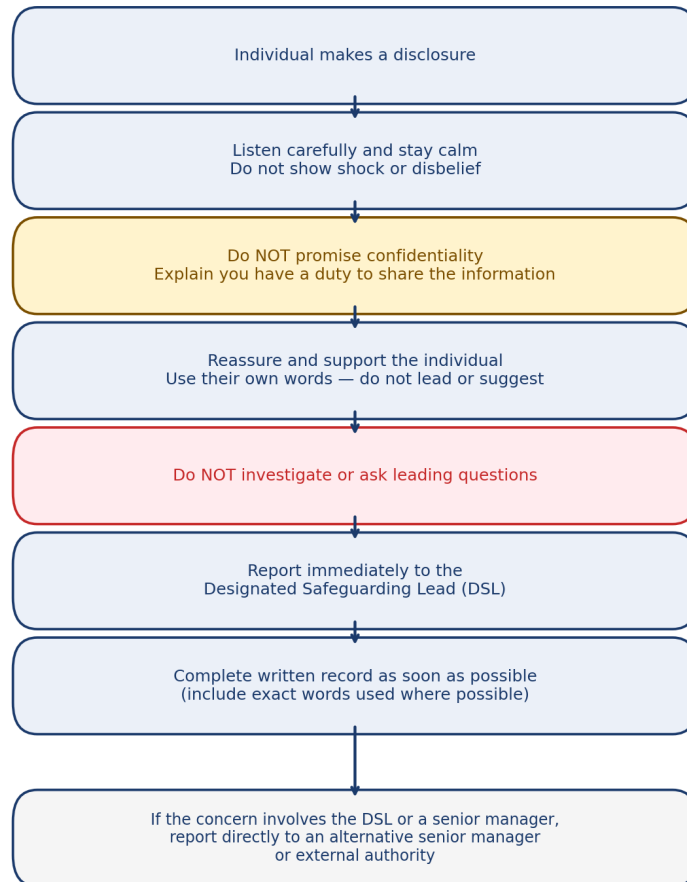
Physical Indicators	Unexplained injuries such as bruises, burns, or fractures / Injuries inconsistent with explanation given / Frequent or repeated injuries / Signs of restraint
Behavioural Indicators	Withdrawal, anxiety, or depression / Sudden changes in behaviour or mood / Fear of certain individuals or environments / Reluctance to engage or communicate / Aggression or agitation
Emotional Indicators	Low self esteem or loss of confidence / Tearfulness or distress / Signs of fear, shame, or guilt / Isolation from others
Financial Indicators	Unexplained loss of money or possessions / Sudden changes in financial situation / Unusual banking activity / Dependence on others for financial decisions
Neglect Indicators	Poor personal hygiene / Malnutrition or dehydration / Untreated medical conditions / Inappropriate clothing or living conditions
Environmental Indicators	Unsafe or unclean living environment / Lack of basic facilities or support / Signs of hoarding or self neglect
General Indicators	A person reporting abuse / A third party raising concerns / Changes that 'don't feel right' or raise concern

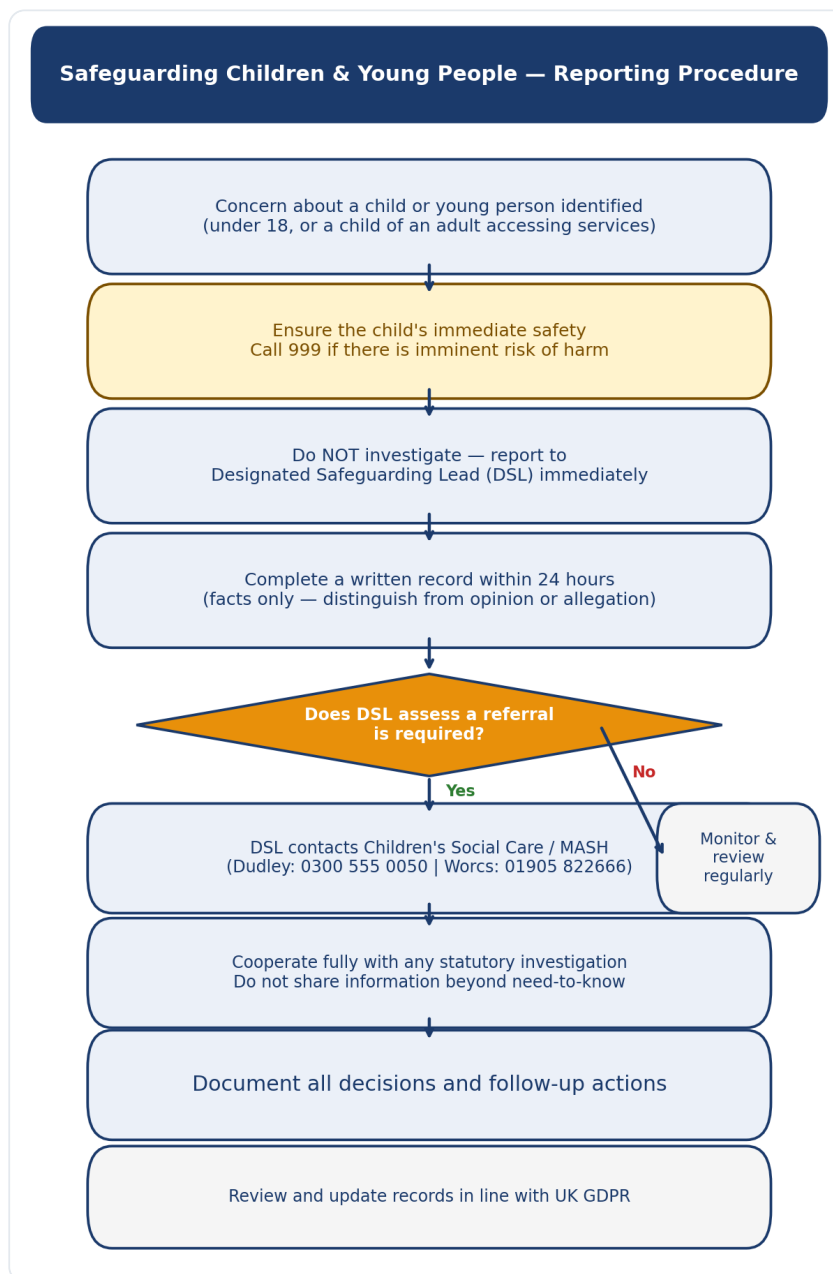
IMPORTANT NOTE

These indicators are not definitive proof of abuse. However, they should be taken seriously and may require further exploration and reporting in line with safeguarding procedures.

Appendix 3: Safeguarding Reporting Flowcharts

When an Individual Discloses Abuse





Appendix 4: Safeguarding Contacts

Unique Minds operates primarily within Birmingham and Solihull local authority areas, covering the wider West Midlands, and works in partnership with relevant safeguarding teams.

Birmingham (Maypole / South Birmingham)	Solihull
Adult Safeguarding: 0121 303 1234 / Out of Hours (Emergency): 0121 675 4806 / Safeguarding Adults Board: www.bsab.org / Website: www.birmingham.gov.uk	Adult Safeguarding: 0121 704 8007 / Out of Hours (Emergency): 0121 605 6060 / Email: ccadults@solihull.gov.uk / Website: www.solihull.gov.uk

NATIONAL SUPPORT

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 / National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247