

Active IQ Policy: Safeguarding of children and adults, and the duty of Prevent

About Active IQ

Active IQ is a leading awarding organisation and End-Point Assessment organisation (EPAO) regulated and recognised to provide qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and apprentice end-point assessments throughout the UK. With over 500 centres across the UK and internationally, we are the leading awarding organisation for health and fitness qualifications in the active leisure sector.

Equality of opportunity

Active IQ actively promotes the equality of opportunity from the initial design and development of all its products and services, through to the delivery, assessment and awarding of qualifications and certificates of achievement. A copy of Active IQ's Equal Opportunity policy is available on our website.

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding looks at the wider practice(s) surrounding the needs of children, young people and adults at risk. Safeguarding can be defined as keeping children and adults safe from harm, such as illness, abuse or injury.

Government guidance "Working together to safeguard children" (March 2015) states that safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best chances in life;

All agencies working with children and adults at risk should take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to an individual's welfare are minimised. When there are concerns about an individual's welfare, all agencies should be equipped to take appropriate action(s) to address those concerns; working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies, where applicable. With this in mind, Active IQ takes its responsibilities very seriously in relation to the management of these risks.

This policy on safeguarding demonstrates Active IQ's commitment to ensuring the safety and welfare of any child, young person or adult (vulnerable, or otherwise) who is involved with Active IQ, its staff, products or services either directly or by association via its own requirements of any Active IQ approved centre (the Centre Agreement).

This commitment is delivered in the following ways:

- A signed Code of Ethical Conduct (centres)
- Appropriate check and challenge within the recruitment and approval processes
- Appropriate Disclosing and Barring declaration checks
- Annual review of associated policies and procedures

- A designated safeguarding officer
- A clear process for disclosure (clear lines of reporting and recording)
- Safeguarding panel review and hearing terms of reference
- Appropriate induction and ongoing training for staff

Legislation and the legal context (for children and vulnerable adults)

This policy has been developed and underpinned by the following principal legislation:

- The Children's Act (2004)
- The Protection of Children Act (1999)
- The Human Rights Act (1989)
- Working together to safeguard children (HM Government 2015)
- Department of Health "No Secrets" (March 2000)
- The Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act (2000)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Care Act (2014)

The legislation and obligations of Active IQ in relation to any DBS disclosures that come to our attention mean that (under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, Section 26 and Schedule 4 - Offenders and individuals banned from working with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults) it is an offence punishable by imprisonment to apply for work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults if an individual has been:

- convicted of a Schedule Four Offence and/or;
- put on the Protection of Children Act List (POCA3) and/or;
- put on the Protection of Vulnerable Adults List (POVA4) and/or;
- considered unsuitable or banned from working with children under section 142 of the Education Act of 2005.

It is also an offence for anyone knowingly to employ such a person in such a capacity, either on a voluntary or a paid basis. If any information is received during a recruitment process as a result of a criminal records check from the Disclosure & Barring Service (England & Wales), the individual must be reported to the police.

To note, Active IQ supports the rehabilitation of offenders and accepts that appropriate employment is an integral part of this process. This being the case, careful consideration will always be given to the individual circumstances of an applicant and to any risks to the welfare and protection of vulnerable individuals with whom the applicant may come into contact, as part of their role with Active IQ.

Context for Active IQ

Whilst Active IQ does not work directly with children, it has several qualifications designed for those who wish to teach, coach or instruct in environments where children may live, work or play, and where they may work directly with both these populations, and potentially with adults also vulnerable to risk in similar circumstances.

As an End-Point Assessment organisation, Active IQ will also be deploying contracted staff (assessors) directly into environments where possibly both these populations are present and, either directly or indirectly, interacting with Active IQ staff.

A designated Safeguarding Officer

Active IQ is one of a group of companies owned by the parent company Ascend Learning, and enjoys the use of several shared services (e.g human resources, IT and finance). The designated safeguarding officer and the safeguarding panel (responsible for hearing, investigating and externally reporting any concerns or incidences of safeguarding issues) will be a central responsibility.

Active IQ's designated Safeguarding Officer is Ben Jackson (Qualification Development Manager), and any issues or concerns relating to safeguarding responsibilities should be, in the first instance, directed to him, from where decisions to implement any formal procedures will be taken, in line with this policy.

Active IQ's Safeguarding Panel is comprised of three members of Active IQ staff (none of whom would have involvement in any day to day activity directly relating to children or vulnerable adults), the Managing Director of Active IQ and an independent panel member with expertise and experience in a relevant field. Panel members' details available upon request where appropriate.

Safeguarding review

Active IQ will ensure that this policy, and any associated processes and issues arising, will be reviewed on a regular basis as a standing item included in the Senior Management Team's terms of reference.

Guidance and training

All staff are to be provided with guidance and training, both during induction, and periodically, to ensure knowledge and understanding of current legislation, best practice and correct protocols remain up to date for all relevant staff.

What is the Prevent duty for further education providers?

As an organisation not in receipt of any government funding, the scope of responsibility in relation to Prevent is narrow, however we recognise our responsibility to the many thousands of learners and apprentices who are involved with our products and services every year, and it remains our aim to support both them, and those who provide such services on our behalf.

This statement has therefore been written to provide Active IQ approved centres sufficient introductory guidance to assist them in making decisions about whether or not they are both obliged to consider whether or not the Prevent duty applies to them and, if so, whether or not they have sufficient policies and procedures in place to fulfil that obligation. Regardless of either of these facts, Active IQ recommends all its centres (whether in receipt of ESFA funding or not – either directly, or indirectly) familiarise themselves with all aspects of the government guidance on the Prevent duty, as terrorism and extremist behaviour is not limited to these specific environments, but across all walks of life.

Further Education Institutions are subject to the duties of Prevent in relation to terrorism and extremist behaviour (both violent and non-violent), and is explained below:

Section 26(1) of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (“the Act”) imposes a duty on “specified authorities”, when exercising their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. There is an important role for further education institutions, including sixth form colleges and independent training providers, in helping prevent people being drawn into terrorism, which includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. It is a condition of funding that all further education and independent training providers must comply with relevant legislation and any statutory responsibilities associated with the delivery of education and safeguarding of learners.”

The government defines extremism as “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.”

More information on the government’s official Guidance can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445915/Prevent_Duty_Guidance_For_Further_Education__England__Wales_-Interactive.pdf

Managing risk

Active IQ approved centres must have clear and visible policies and procedures for managing whistleblowing and complaints, as part of the standard Centre Agreement. In England, if an individual feels that their complaint has not been taken seriously by the centre, they can raise it with Active IQ, as our Complaints Policy states. They may also raise it with the ESFA (for colleges or private providers funded by this agency), or where relevant, the appropriate regulator, such as Ofqual. Where an institution has sub-contracted the delivery of courses to other providers, all authorities expect robust procedures to be in place to ensure that the sub-contractor is aware of the Prevent duty and the sub-contractor is not inadvertently funding extremist organisations. Please note, in Wales the Safer Working Practice Guidance and assessment process should also be adhered to.

Any information relating to the Prevent duty that comes to light in relation to any Active IQ centre will be dealt with in conjunction with its existing policies (e.g. complaints, safeguarding and risk management), and entered onto the risk register accordingly. Active IQ will also have a dedicated officer responsible for managing and coordinating any response to issues or events relating to our Prevent duties as an awarding organisation.

Staff awareness, training and the Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

As the independent body responsible for standards and quality improvement for further education, the Education and Training Foundation will work with the sector to ensure that appropriate training is available. Where appropriate, Active IQ will direct its approved centres to this training facility, to help them meet their own obligations. Active IQ will also ensure, where appropriate, that its own staff and any sub-contractors, are aware of current best practice and associated legislation in relation to the Prevent duty.

IT and Prevent

Further to the above, the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) can provide specialist advice and support to the FE sector in England to help providers ensure students are safe online and appropriate safeguards are in place. Active IQ will also ensure any approved centre requiring this type of support is made aware of its availability. Active IQ’s own IT systems and software is managed centrally as a shared service offered under its parent company Ascend Learning.

Funded providers and Ofsted (Safeguarding and Prevent)

Many Active IQ centres are registered on the Register of Approved Training Organisations (RoTO), and as such, in receipt of public funding via the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and subject to the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework (CIF). Where Ofsted finds a publicly-funded further education institution or independent training provider inadequate, including in relation to their Prevent duties, intervention action would be taken. In the case of independent providers, this is likely to result in their contract being terminated by the ESFA. Where possible, Active IQ will seek to support those approved centres subject to this inspection framework, providing guidance and training where appropriate.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Definitions

Children and young people

What is Child Protection?

Making children's welfare a priority;

- A responsibility for all those who are directly or indirectly involved with children;
- Ensuring that all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language or racial origins have the right to protection from abuse;
- Understanding what constitutes abuse;
- Taking positive steps to prevent further abuse and dealing with all suspicions and allegations of abuse seriously and swiftly; and
- Working in partnership with agencies qualified to address the issues, such as the Police, and the NSPCC.

What is Abuse?

Abuse has been categorised into four different types:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Sexual

The four categories of abuse are not mutually exclusive. An abused individual may well be suffering more than one type. The definitions and possible indicators are taken from "Working together to safeguard children" (March 2015).

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Possible indicators of physical abuse

Physical observations;

- Bruising especially on the trunk, face, upper arm, shoulders and neck consistent with gripping and fingertip bruising or finger marks;
- Burns and scalds especially cigarette burns, burns caused by lengthy exposure to heat;
- Human bite marks;
- Fractures, particularly spiral fractures;
- Swelling and lack of normal use of limbs;

Any serious injury with no explanation or conflict explanations / inconsistent accounts; and

- Untreated injuries

Possible behavioural observations and indicators of physical abuse

- Unusually fearful with adults;
- Unnaturally compliant to parents;
- Refusal to discuss injuries / fear of medical help;
- Withdrawal from physical contact;
- Aggression towards others; and
- Wears cover-up clothing

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- failing to protect from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

Possible behavioural observations and indicators of neglect

- Constant hunger;
- Constant tiredness;
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school;
- Destructive tendencies;
- Low self-esteem;
- Neurotic behaviour;
- No social relationships;
- Running away; and
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

Possible physical observations and indicators of neglect

- Poor personal hygiene;
- Poor state of clothing;
- Emaciation, pot belly, short stature;
- Poor skin and hair tone; and
- Untreated medical problems

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non – penetrative

acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Possible physical observations and indicators of sexual abuse

- Damage to genitalia, anus or mouth;
- Sexually transmitted disease(s);
- Soreness in genital area, anus or mouth; and
- Unexplained recurrent urinary tract infections and discharges or abdominal pain

Possible behavioural observations and indicators of sexual abuse

- Sexual knowledge inappropriate to the age of the child;
- Sexualised behaviour in young children;
- Sexually provocative behaviour / promiscuity;
- Hinting at sexual activity;
- Inexplicable decline in school performance;
- Sudden apparent changes in personality;
- Lack of concentration, restlessness, aimlessness;
- Socially withdrawn;
- Overly compliant behaviour;
- Poor trust in significant adults;
- Aggressive behaviour, onset of wetting, day and night; and
- Onset of insecure, clinging behaviour

Indirect sexual abuse

Indirect sexual abuse can include:

- Genital exposure – “flashing”;
- Using children in, or exposing children to, pornographic material; and
- Encouraging two children to have sex

Whilst sex between adolescents under 16 is unlawful, it is not considered to be abuse if exploitation is not an issue, that is, if both parties were consenting, force was not used and there has been no misuse of power based on age difference (five years or more) or other form of authority.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that she or he is worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Possible indicators of emotional abuse

- Physical, mental and developmental lags;
- Acceptance of punishment which appears excessive;
- Over reaction to mistakes;
- Continual self-deprecation;
- Sudden speech disorders;
- Fear of new situations;
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations;
- Neurotic behaviour, such as rocking, hair twisting or thumb sucking;
- Self-mutilation;
- Fear of parents being contacted;
- Extremes of passivity or aggression;
- Drug or solvent abuse;
- Running away; and
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

Staff should note that many of the symptoms in all four areas described above, can be caused by a variety of other factors which are not related to child abuse.

It is important to stress that:

It is not your responsibility to decide if a child or adult is being abused, but it is your responsibility to act if you have concerns.

Appendix 2.

Adults

What is adult abuse?

Adult abuse can lead to a violation of someone's human and civil rights by another person or persons. Abuse can be physical, financial, verbal or psychological. It can be the result of an act or a failure to act, a single act or repeated acts. It can happen when an adult at risk is persuaded into a financial or sexual exchange they have not consented to, or cannot consent to. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm or exploitation.

- Domestic abuse
- Revenge porn
- Hate crime
- Forced marriage
- Honour based violence
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Human trafficking
- Modern slavery
- Radicalisation
- Other personal circumstances *e.g.* stress

Some adult abuse may fall within the following categories:

Physical

Any deliberate act to cause physical harm including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication or restraint.

Financial or Material

Theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or misusing property, possessions and benefits.

Sexual

Involvement in a sexual act to which the vulnerable person has not consented, or to which he or she could not consent or was pressured into consenting.

Neglect and Acts of Omission

Ignoring medical or physical care needs and withholding the necessities of life such as nutrition, heating and medication.

Psychological

Emotional abuse, threats to harm or abandon the person, depriving them of contact, humiliating, blaming, controlling, intimidating, coercing or harassing them, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawing services and support networks.

Discriminatory

Based on cultural, sexual, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Institutional

Mistreatment or abuse by an organisation or the individuals within it.

Domestic

Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (including any of the above) occurring between adults who are or have been in an intimate relationship or are family members – regardless of gender or sexuality.

Abuse can occur anywhere, including:

- own home
- a carer's home
- day care
- residential care
- nursing home
- hospital

An abuser is usually known to the person being abused and can include:

- partner, child, relative
- friend/neighbour
- paid/volunteer worker
- health/social worker or other professional

Domestic abuse affecting members of staff

Work colleagues who are experiencing domestic abuse may not feel able to tell people at work of their situation or approach their manager. However, staff should be vigilant to other issues such as frequent absence from work, poor performance or a member of staff's partner frequently contacting them at work, may alert a manager to the possibility that the underlying cause of these circumstances, could be domestic abuse. Managers should take this into account in considering how to deal with the situation. If there is an underlying cause which has been identified then offering appropriate support may mean that the member of staff is able to deal with their situation more effectively.

Adjustments to working arrangements

A member of staff may need to take time off work to attend counselling sessions, legal appointments, make alternative living arrangements etc. Active IQ will make every effort to assist a staff member if a member of staff needs to be absent from work due to problems that have arisen from domestic abuse.

It may be appropriate to allow paid time off under the Compassionate Leave Policy in emergency or unexpected situations. Where appointments or time off are planned then the member of staff will be expected to use annual leave or flexi time.

The length of the absence will be determined by the individual's situation and in consultation with the member of staff.

Reviewing member of staff's circumstances

Many of the workplace actions and safeguards may be temporary and managers should discuss safety and review changes in circumstances with the member of staff at regular intervals.

Confidentiality

For members of staff experiencing and receiving support for domestic abuse, it must remain confidential as far as it is reasonably practicable within our duties as an employer. Once a member of staff has confided to their manager that they are experiencing domestic abuse, the manager should reassure them that they will keep this information confidential, unless the member of staff gives express permission to disclose information or there are circumstances that warrant sharing information.

This could include where there are child protection issues. If a member of staff gives information that suggests that a child or adult is at risk from abuse (whether physical, emotional, sexual or neglect), the manager should inform the member of staff that they will be referring to Children's or Adult's Services in accordance with safeguarding policies and procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or any other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM is considered a grave violation of the rights of girls and women.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, criminal and civil legislation on FGM is contained in the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, and in the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation (Scotland) Act 2005.

The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 provides for a mandatory reporting duty which requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s to the police.

What to do if you have concern about someone who is at risk of FGM:

- Speak with your Designated Safeguarding Officer who should then contact the local authority designated officer or team
- If someone is at imminent risk of FGM contact the police immediately

For further information on FGM, contact the NSPCC
(FGM) on 0800 028 3550 or email
fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Appendix 3.

Modern Slavery and Trafficking

Modern Slavery can take many forms including the trafficking of people, forced labour, servitude and slavery. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever they can to pressurise, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse and inhumane treatment.

Any consent victims have given to their treatment will be irrelevant where they have been coerced, deceived or provided with payment or benefit to achieve that consent. Children (those under 18) are considered victims of trafficking, whether or not they have been coerced, deceived or paid to secure their compliance. They need only to have been recruited, transported, received or harboured for the purpose of exploitation.

The term Modern Slavery captures a whole range of types of exploitation, many of which occur together. These include but are not limited to:

Sexual Exploitation

This includes but is not limited to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, forced prostitution and the abuse of children for the production of child abuse images/videos. 42% of all reported trafficking victims in the UK are victims of sexual exploitation.

Domestic Servitude

This involves a victim being forced to work in usually private households, usually performing domestic chores and childcare duties. Their freedom may be restricted and they may work long hours often for little or no pay, often sleeping where they work. A quarter (24%) of reported victims of domestic servitude in the UK are children.

Forced Labour

Victims may be forced to work long hours for little or no pay in poor conditions under verbal or physical threats of violence to them or their families. It can happen in various industries. Often victims are housed together in one dwelling. Over a third (36%) of reported victims of Modern Slavery are subject to forced labour.

Criminal Exploitation

This can be understood as the exploitation of a person to commit a crime, such as pick-pocketing, shop-lifting, cannabis cultivation, drug trafficking and other similar activities that are subject to penalties and imply financial gain for the trafficker. Many reported Modern Slavery victims are also involved in fraud or financial crime whereby perpetrators force victims to claim benefits on arrival but the money is withheld, or the victim is forced to take out loans or credit cards.

Other forms of exploitation

May include - organ removal; forced begging; forced benefit fraud; forced marriage and illegal adoption. Some abuse can be linked to beliefs such as spirit possession or witchcraft.

Modern Slavery covers a range of complex issues that are often hard to detect, it is important the public are aware that such abuses can take place and that victims have a right to identification and support.

In the case of children, child trafficking and exploitation is child abuse and therefore should be treated as a child protection matter, with police and the local authority designated officer or team notified immediately and existing safeguarding procedures followed.

Indicators of Modern Slavery

Signs of various types of modern slavery and exploitation are often hidden, making it hard to recognise potential victims. Victims can be any age, gender or ethnicity or nationality. Some of the common signs may include:

- **Legal documents** - the person may not be in possession of their legal documents (passport, identification and bank account details) as these may be being held by someone else
- **Medical care** – the person may have old or untreated injuries, and vague, reluctant or inconsistent in explaining how the injury occurred
- **Appearance** – the person may look malnourished, unkempt, or appear withdrawn. They may appear to have few personal possessions and may often wear the same clothes
- **Behaviour** – the person may appear to be withdrawn or frightened, unable to answer questions directed at them or speak for themselves and/or an accompanying third party may speak for them. They may also appear to be under the control/influence of others, rarely interact or appear unfamiliar with their neighbourhood or where they work. Many victims will not be able to speak English
- **Debt bondage** – the person may perceive themselves to be in debt to someone else or in a situation of dependence

Signs specific to child victims

- **Absent parent or legal guardian** – the child may be being cared for by an adult that is not their parent or legal guardian, the quality of this relationship may be poor and be a reason for concern
- **Multiple children** – there may be a number of unrelated children at one address, and a child may move location frequently
- **Identity documents** – more often than not documents may be missing, altered or found to be false
- **Grooming** – children may not always demonstrate outward signs of distress and may have a 'bond' with those exploiting them. Many who have been groomed will not disclose their abuse – however, they are likely to be very scared and traumatised

Appendix 4.

Terminology and when to make a referral

Stated below are some important terms commonly used with reference to safeguarding matters and may need to be noted when reporting such incidents. Therefore, it is important to understand the meaning of four key terms:

Disclosed abuse - this is when an individual confides in you that he or she is or has been suffering abuse.

Suspected abuse - when you observe symptoms such as unexplained injuries or changes in behaviour that give cause for concern.

Reported abuse - when someone tells you that a child or adult is being abused or that they are abusing a child or adult themselves.

Referral - the facts of the case are reported to the Police.

Why you should make a referral

The greatest fear about reporting suspected abuse cases is that you may be wrong and the resulting consequences bring about pain and suffering for children, their parents and those accused. In such situations it

is worth remembering these points:

- Your first responsibility is to the welfare of the child;
- Many parents/guardians will actually recognise this and appreciate that you made the referral out of concern for the child;
- It is not your responsibility to make judgements – only to share your concerns; and
- Any information you provide may be essential in building up a complete picture of an abused individual or a suspected abuser

Ultimately, it is important to remember that... **“the consequences of reporting suspected abuse and being wrong can be difficult. The consequence of not reporting suspected child abuse could be fatal.”** (Protecting Children: NSPCC).

Concerns regarding an adult

If you are concerned about the welfare of an adult, apart from a member of staff when internal procedures will be referred to, adopt the following procedure:

- Stay calm
- **Listen** to what is being said, without rushing or probing
- **Reassure** the individual if they have disclosed information to you, that he or she was right to talk to you
- Do not promise confidentiality; explain that you will need to share the information with others who can help
- **Refer** the information to your line manager / Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately
- **Record** accurate information on your observation and discussion

Disclosure of information by a child

If a child tells you that he or she is being abused, or another adult informs you of their concerns, adopt the following procedure:

DO

- Stay calm
- **Listen** to what is being said, without rushing or probing
- **Reassure** the individual that he or she was right to talk to you
- Do not promise confidentiality; explain that you will need to share the information with others who can help
- **Refer** the information to your line manager / Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately
- **Record** accurate information on your observation and discussions

DO NOT

- Do not panic
- Do not keep the information to yourself. Discuss the disclosure with your line manager
- Do not investigate or probe by asking questions