ST ANNE'S COMMUNITY SERVICES

POLICY

1.24 Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Policy Category	**Category 1 – ELT & Trustees, All Staff**
Policy/Procedure Cross Ref	1.23 Safeguarding Adults Policy 4.01 Health and Safety Policy ZZ2.06 Safeguarding Children & Young People
Summary of Policy Changes	**7.1** Full review no changes. To match all safeguarding policy review dates **V7.2 – January 2024** – Template updated. **V7.3 June 2024** – Reviewed and no changes. **V7.4 – June 2025 –** Reviewed and separated into a policy and a separate procedure, annual review no changes. **V7.5 – March 2026** – Annual review
Policy Owner	**Director of Operations & Quality**
Approval	**ELT – Quality & People Committee - Board**
Published Date	**August 2026**
Expiry Date	**August 2027**

1.0 Policy Summary

St Anne's Community Services is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. Although the organisation primarily supports adults, this policy ensures that staff and volunteers who may come into contact with children are equipped to protect them from abuse and harm.

It outlines a child-centred, coordinated approach to safeguarding, emphasising early help, listening to the voice of the child, and working in partnership with families and agencies.

For the full details of this policy, please read the entire document, not just the summary.

2.0 Scope

All staff and volunteers across the organisation are required to:

- Understand and act on their responsibility to protect children and young people from harm.
- Follow local safeguarding procedures and report concerns promptly.
- Undertake safeguarding training appropriate to their role.
- Use professional curiosity to identify and respond to potential safeguarding issues.
- Avoid behaviours that could place children at risk or compromise professional boundaries.

3.0 Main Policy Content

3.1 Definitions of Abuse

The policy adopts definitions from the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance, emphasizing that abuse can occur through direct harm or failure to act. Abuse may happen in various settings and can be perpetrated by anyone, including family members, carers, or professionals.

3.2 Definition of a Child and Young Person

A child is defined as anyone under 18, regardless of their living situation or independence. Young people aged 16–17 are still considered children under safeguarding legislation and are entitled to the same protections.

3.3 Vulnerability of Children with Disabilities

Children with disabilities may face increased risks of abuse due to communication barriers, dependency on others, and societal attitudes. The policy highlights the importance of recognising these vulnerabilities and ensuring appropriate safeguards are in place.

3.4 Types of Abuse
The accompanying procedure outlines various forms of abuse including physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, and exploitation. It also includes modern concerns such as cyberbullying, grooming, child trafficking, domestic abuse, and online abuse, reflecting current safeguarding challenges.

3.5Staff Responsibilities
All staff must act if they suspect a child is at risk. This includes reporting concerns, avoiding inappropriate behaviour, and never investigating allegations themselves. Staff are expected to use professional curiosity and follow local safeguarding procedures.

3.6 Management Responsibilities
The Director of Operations serves as the Safeguarding Lead, responsible for ensuring policy compliance, staff training, and appropriate responses to allegations. Safeguarding must be embedded in all levels of management and People/HR practices.

3.7 Recruitment and Training
St Anne's enforces rigorous recruitment checks, including DBS screening, to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children. All staff receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role, with ongoing supervision to reinforce learning.

3.8 Reporting and Record-Keeping
Clear procedures are in place for reporting concerns, including immediate action in emergencies and ensuring proper documentation is in place and updated. Staff must report to their manager or the Safeguarding Lead any concerns around record keeping, and all records must be securely stored and handled confidentially. The Quality and People Committee and the Board receive regular reports on safeguarding.

3.9 Managing Allegations Against Staff
If a staff member is accused of abuse, the accompanying procedure outlines a structured response involving immediate safety measures, reporting to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and potential disciplinary action. Internal investigations are conducted alongside any police or social care inquiries once permission has been given by the LADO.

4.0 Effects

- A safer environment for children and young people who come into contact with St Anne's services.
- Increased awareness and responsiveness among staff to safeguarding issues.
- Clear procedures for reporting and managing concerns or allegations.
- Stronger inter-agency collaboration and compliance with statutory safeguarding responsibilities.
- Continuous improvement in safeguarding practices through training, supervision, and policy review as part of St Anne's Safeguarding Assurance Group.

5.0 Appendix
None