

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

1. Policy Statement

FRED is committed to providing a safe learning environment for those who use our services ("Learners") and our Coaches ("Individuals giving time without material or financial reward to help FRED achieve its aims"), so that they will feel secure and able to concentrate on the learning process. We recognise that this is a sensitive and complicated issue and any volunteer or learner who is exposed to abuse will receive the full support and help of FRED in accordance with the terms of this policy.

This policy aims to explain what adult abuse is and how we can recognise it, demonstrate how FRED will safeguard against adult abuse and provide procedures to guide management of concerns or allegations in relation to abuse.

2. Definitions

Adults at risk replaces the previously used term 'vulnerable adult' as set out in the government's 'no secrets' guidance in 2000. It is the term used to identify a person who, due to their needs for care and support, whether permanent or temporary, and whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs, who 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 local authority may not be meeting those needs because for example, the person funds their own care or they have not been previously known to the local authority, so no enquiry has yet been made.)

Abuse & Neglect are forms of maltreatment of an individual. These terms refer to a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person(s) and include serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the individual's health or development. Abuse to adults at risk may consist of a single act or repeated acts and may be an act of neglect, or omission, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not consented or cannot consent. Adults at risk may be abused or neglected through the infliction of harm, or through the failure to act to prevent harm.

Abuse can occur in any relationship or in an institution or community setting, within all social groups regardless of religion, culture, social class or financial position. Adults at risk may be abused by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by adults, children, peers, paid or voluntary workers, health or social care workers, resulting in the harm to or exploitation of the individual. Often people do not realise they are abusing and sometimes the stress of caring can cause a carer to act out of character.

Care and support is described in the 2014 Care Act as: The mixture of practical, financial and emotional support for adults who need extra help to manage their lives and be independent, including older people, people with a disability or long-term illness, people with mental health problems and carers. Care and support includes assessment of people's needs, provision of services and the allocation of funds to enable a person to purchase their own care and support. It

could include care home, home care, personal assistants, day services, or the provision of aids and adaptations.

Capacity refers to an individual's ability to make a decision or take a particular action for themselves at a particular time, even if they are able to make other decisions. For example, they may be able to make small decisions about everyday matters such as what to wear, or what a healthy diet would be, but they lack capacity to make more complex decisions about financial matters. Capacity may be affected by things such as; medication, substances and some untreated mental health issues. Where an adult is found to lack capacity to make a decision then any action taken, or any decision made for, or on their behalf, must be made in their best interests.

3. Status of the Policy

This Policy has been approved by FRED Management Committee who are responsible for ensuring compliance of this policy.

Any questions or concerns about the operation of this policy, or if you consider that this policy has not been followed, you should raise the matter in the first instance with the Safeguarding Champion.

4. Application

FRED recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that anybody can become the victim of abuse, therefore it aims to provide a safe environment for all. However, the safeguarding duties of FRED apply to adults at risk as described in section 2 of this policy. The Care Act states that in order to be eligible for a safeguarding enquiry under section 42 of the Act, the person must have needs as described above.

Where you have concerns regarding abuse against an adult who does not require safeguarding duties and require advice, see Appendix B.

Where an adult is not known to fit the description in clause 2 but the coach has reasonable cause for concern that the person has needs which put them at risk, the Safeguarding Champion should contact the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding helpdesk for advice.

5. Safeguarding principles

FRED upholds the 2014 Care Act values to make safeguarding personal, meaning it should be person-led and outcome-focused. It requires that the person is engaged in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that involves them and gives choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety.

Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, people must be assumed to have capacity to make their own decisions and be given all practicable help to do so before anyone treats them as not being able to make their own decisions. For adults, this means that they have the capacity to choose how they live and make decisions about their safety, even if we do not agree with certain decisions.

6. Who might abuse?

People may be abused by a wide range of people including relatives and family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends and associates, people who deliberately exploit vulnerable people, and strangers.

7. Types of abuse

Abuse can take many forms, and incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and affect one person or more. Abuse may also be very subtle and therefore we draw your attention to the following types of abuse which you may come across. Professionals and others should look beyond single incidents or individuals to identify patterns of harm. This list is not exhaustive and we therefore encourage Volunteers to be alert and take the initiative to spot these forms of abuse as well as other forms that might occur:

1. **Physical abuse:** including hitting, slapping, scratching, pushing, rough handling, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint without justifiable reasons, inappropriate sanctions including deprivation of food, warmth, clothing and health care needs.
2. **Sexual abuse:** including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, unwanted sexual text messages, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into and sexual coercion,
3. **Emotional or Psychological abuse:** including threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, ridicule, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, unwanted communication, stalking, harassment, inappropriate messaging; with kisses attached, verbal abuse and cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal from services or supportive networks. Deliberate denial of religious or cultural needs and failure to provide access to appropriate skills and educational development.
4. **Domestic violence:** including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence. And can affect those it is not aimed at within the home.
5. **Financial or material abuse:** including misuse or theft of money, fraud, extortion of material assets or inappropriate requests for money, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance of financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
6. **Neglect and acts of omission:** including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care and support or educational services or equipment for functional independence, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, heating and lighting. Failure to give privacy and dignity.
7. **Modern slavery:** encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
8. **Discriminatory abuse:** including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, colour, language, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion. Hate crime
9. **Organisational abuse:** including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
10. **Self Neglect:** this covers a wide range of behaviour, neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Safeguarding within the Affiliated Group
11. **Use of Social Media in an abusive way:** abuse can also occur through social media and this is often harder to detect. It is important to remember that the type of abuse that can occur through social media does not always include emotional and psychological abuse and can include sexual and financial abuse. Social media includes (but is not limited to) networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, email, text messages, Skype and instant messaging services.

8. Recognising abuse

Factors described below are frequently found in cases of abuse and/or neglect. Their presence is not proof abuse has occurred, but must be regarded as indicators of possible significant harm. Such indications justify the need for careful assessment and discussion with the group Safeguarding Champion, and may require consultation with and/or referral to the local authority adult safeguarding helpdesk. It is not the responsibility of those working for or volunteering with FRED to decide that abuse to an adult at risk is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.

Indications that adults at risk may be experiencing abuse include the following:

1. The adult at risk appears frightened of the parent/s/peers/adults.
2. The adult at risk may display unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
3. The adult at risk may have an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
4. The adult at risk may demonstrate inexplicable changes in behaviour.
5. The adult at risk may demonstrate inappropriate sexual awareness.
6. The adult at risk may engage in sexually explicit behaviour.
7. The adult at risk may display an unusual distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
8. The adult at risk may experience difficulty in making friends.
9. The adult at risk may be prevented from socialising with other adults/young people.
10. The adult at risk may display variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
11. The adult at risk may experience inexplicable weight loss.
12. The adult at risk may appear increasingly dirty or unkempt.

9. Confidentiality

Protection of adults at risk raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood. The following guidelines should be adopted when concerns around adult protection arise to ensure that the referral procedure complies with the Data Protection Act (1998) and the Freedom of Information Act (2000), although not at the risk of safeguarding adults at risk.

Staff, volunteers and trustees have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of adults at risk with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies and adult social care services.

All personal information regarding an adult at risk will be kept confidential. All written records to be kept in a secure area for a specific time as identified in FRED data protection policy. Records will only record details required in the Adult at Risk Cause for Concern Report Form, Appendix B of this policy.

If an adult confides in a member of staff or volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the adult is told sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies. Within that context, the adult must, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it. Where possible, consent should be obtained from the adult before sharing personal information with the Local Adult Safeguarding helpdesk. However in some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the adults at risk is the priority.

The Safeguarding Champion must assure the adult that they will always be informed of any action to be taken and why. The adult's involvement in the process of sharing information must be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account.

Issues surrounding abuse or potential abuse are highly sensitive and are to be treated as confidential. We ask that you respect the person's right to confidentiality and refrain from disclosing any information about the case to anyone who does not 'need to know.'

Disclosure of information includes verbal discussions as well as disclosure of personal or confidential information relating to the situation over email or social media sites, such as Facebook or Twitter. Failure to maintain and respect confidentiality and or the terms of this policy may result in the Affiliated Group giving those involved notice to cease working as a Volunteer and lead to disciplinary action for staff.

10. Procedures for sharing confidential information

1. Seek advice if in any doubt. (Without disclosing the identity of the person where possible,) consult with your Safeguarding Champion or if not available the local council Safeguarding Adults Helpdesk.
2. Be transparent. The Data Protection Act (DPA) is not a barrier to sharing information but to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately; except in circumstances where by doing so it places the person at significant risk of harm.
3. Consider the public interest. Base all decisions to share information on the safety and well-being of that person or others that may be affected by their actions.

4. Share with consent where appropriate. Where possible, respond to the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent, if you consider this is in the interest of the person at risk or the public.
5. Record your decision and reasons to share or not share information.
6. Ensure all information shared is accurate, up-to-date, and necessary and share it with only those who need to have it.

11. Provisions in place to guard against abuse within FRED

Abuse can take place anywhere and the Management Team is particularly mindful of the fact that, in dealing with some adults, the opportunity for abuse may arise. At the very least the Management Team implements the following measures:

1. To follow FRED's recruitment process.
2. Two references and an interview for all potential Reading Coaches are requested to try to ensure that appropriate people are recruited.
3. The Management Team will carry out Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks on Volunteers who will be working with 'adults at risk' where the learner lacks capacity under the 2005 Mental Health Act, and at their discretion where there is concern that a learner's lack of personal skills may put them at risk of being manipulated or abused.
4. Reading sessions only take place in pre-approved public venues in accordance with our Venue & Lone Worker Policy.
5. Volunteers are trained in the implementation of this policy.
6. FRED has a named Safeguarding Champion, responsible for dealing with concerns from anyone in the group and for submitting all DBS check applications.
7. The Safeguarding Champion has undergone Safeguarding training.
8. The Coach Coordinator will inform all coaches about this Safeguarding Policy upon enrolment, so that they feel confident about what they can do if they have any anxieties about their relationship with the learners.
9. This information along with the contact details for the Safeguarding Champion and Coach Coordinator will be provided to learners as clearly and simply as possible. They will be assured that their concerns will be taken seriously; informed about how we will manage any investigation into alleged abuse; how they will be involved in determining the outcome of this and who may be informed about the situation.
10. Should there ever be concerns about abuse, or suspected abuse, taking place between a Coach and a Learner, the contact will immediately be stopped and the Safeguarding Champion informed who will then take action in accordance with this policy.

12. Safeguarding concerns for which action must be taken

1. Should anyone within FRED reasonably suspect or become aware of an adult who meets the safeguarding criteria as described in clause 2 of this policy is, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, the Safeguarding Champion must be informed.
2. Should anyone within FRED reasonably suspect or become aware of an adult being the perpetrator of abuse, the Safeguarding Champion must be informed who will contact the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Team for advice on making a disclosure.
3. We recognise that frequent one-to-one meetings between a Learner and a Coach may also give rise to a Coach being abused. If you become aware of an abusive relationship developing between yourself and your learner, the Safeguarding Champion must be informed immediately.
4. If you become aware of abuse between another Coach and a Learner, whether previous, current or potential, inform your Safeguarding Champion.

13. Action to be taken when the disclosure of abuse is in an emergency

1. Ensure that the person is safe, is as comfortable as possible, and if necessary has access to treatment and/or emergency services as is appropriate before taking any other action.
2. If you suspect that a crime has taken place against an adult as described in clause 4 of this policy inform the police as soon as possible. If abuse is recent be careful not to contaminate or remove any possible forensic evidence, e.g. don't tidy up or give the person a wash, or food or drink until after a medical examination. Reassure the learner that they will not be forced to press charges and that no action will be taken by the authorities that they are not in agreement with.
3. Continue to follow the procedure for abuse when not an emergency as below.

14. Action to be taken following the above in clause 13 for an emergency and/or when disclosure of abuse is not an emergency

1. Reassure the person that they have done the right thing to tell you and explain that you will need to inform the Safeguarding Champion who will help them decide what happens next. Do this as soon as possible, contacting the local authority safeguarding adult helpdesk immediately if the Safeguarding Champion is not available.
2. Record details of what has happened on the Adult at Risk Cause for Concern Report Form. This form can be found within Appendix B of this document.
3. The Safeguarding Champion must assess the capacity of the person at risk at the point at which a decision is needed. Should a person's mental capacity to make an informed choice about their safety or evaluate their own personal risk of abuse be unclear or temporarily suspended, the Safeguarding Champion must contact the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding helpdesk for advice.
4. If the person has capacity, the Safeguarding Champion applying the 6 safeguarding principles that underpin this policy as in clause 5 will need to have a conversation with the person concerned to determine which of the following approaches is most appropriate:
5. If a person requests involving the police, the Safeguarding Champion should follow his or her lead and help to do this.

6. Try to obtain permission to contact the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Helpdesk for advice, reassuring them the 2014 Care Act requires that no action will be taken without their being involved and being allowed to determine the outcomes. Also that if they wish it MAY be possible to do this without using names. The Local Authority Helpdesk advice should always be acted upon.

7. If the adult at risk does not wish a particular incident or disclosure to be further investigated or reported to the Police but the Safeguarding Champion still has cause for concern, the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Helpdesk may still be contacted under the confidentiality statement of this policy to obtain advice. It may be possible to do this without using names. The Local Authority Helpdesk advice should always be acted upon, including if names are given whether or not to tell the learner that this advice had been sought.

15. Creating a report of safeguarding concerns

1. Where anyone has cause for a safeguarding concern they should make confidential notes and as soon as possible, and at least within 24 hours record them using the FRED Adult at Risk cause for concern Report form, Appendix B of this policy.

2. Reporting factual evidence accurately.

3. Use the persons own words and phrases.

4. Report all feelings and suspicions, but clearly separated from the factual evidence.

5. Describe the circumstance in which the disclosure came about.

6. Note down the setting and anyone else who was there at the time.

7. Note whether there are noticeable cuts, bruises or other marks on the skin of the person involved.

8. Ensure all reports are kept in accordance with FRED's data protection policy; all previous notes should then be destroyed.

16. Responding to an abused person

If anyone informs you that he/she has been a victim of abuse, please respond in the appropriate manner:

1. Stay calm and try not to show shock or disbelief.

2. Listen very carefully.

3. Be sympathetic.

4. Tell the person that they did the right thing in telling you and that you are treating the information seriously.

5. Don't promise to keep secrets, explain that you must tell the Safeguarding Champion who may need to contact the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Helpdesk.

6. Do not be judgmental (for example, "Why didn't you run away?")

7. Refrain from starting to investigate by doing any of the following:

- a. Asking leading questions such as "Did this..." When cross examined in court this type of questioning can invalidate the evidence.
- b. Pressing the person concerned for more details about the abuse. Too much pressure may result in them not wanting to tell you
- c. Contacting the alleged abuser yourself.

17. Following up further concerns.

If after reporting an incident to the Safeguarding Champion, or contacting the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Helpdesk you are concerned that a problem or incident has not been addressed, consult the FRED Chair, submitting the relevant completed cause for concern report form. This will ensure that the FRED has acted appropriately.

The Management Team will contact the appropriate Local Authority Helpdesk by telephone if urgent and in writing, to ensure that they are aware of the situation and are dealing with it.

18. Current legislation that informs this policy

REUK is committed to improving outcomes for adults at risk by adhering to current legislation that supports the safeguarding of adults, which includes:

- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Freedom of Information Act (2004).
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- The Care Act 2014.
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- The Equality Act 2010.

19. Monitoring and review of the Policy

This policy is reviewed annually by FRED Management Team. Recommendations for any amendments should be reported to the Safeguarding Champion of the organisation.

We will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.

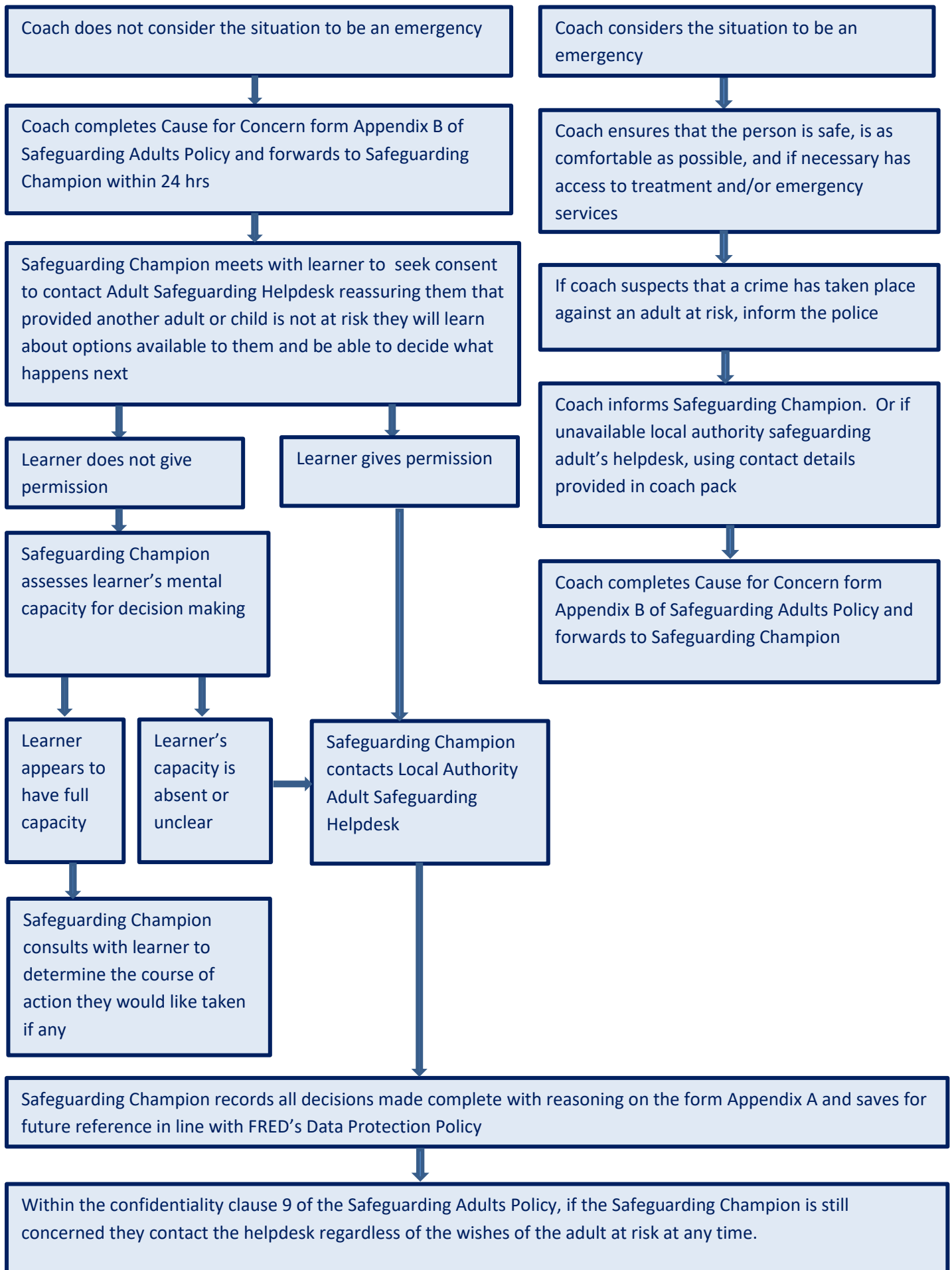
If you require further information on this policy please contact Sheila (sheilapriest49@gmail.com) who will refer you to the FRED Safeguarding Officer.

Useful Helplines.

- Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Helpline 0845 602 9035

APPENDIX A

FLOW CHART FOR SAFEGUARDING CONCERN PROCEDURES



APPENDIX B

Cause for Concern Report Form

When reporting please remember to make clear distinction between facts

INCIDENT REPORT	
Date of Incident	
Time of Incident	
Location of Incident	

SECTION A – ADULT’S DETAILS	
Name of adult	
Date of Birth	
Disability Y/N If yes, please detail:	
Ethnicity:	
Full address:	
Telephone number:	
Name of carer if applicable	
Address (if different from above)	

SECTION B – NATURE OF INCIDENT
Is this report based on: (please tick as appropriate) <input type="checkbox"/> An incident you have witnessed? <input type="checkbox"/> A concern you have based on potential indicators of abuse? <input type="checkbox"/> An allegation or concern that has been reported to you by someone? If the allegation has been reported to you by someone else, other than the adult at risk, please give their details: Name: Address: Postcode: Telephone Number:

SECTION C – DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT/CONCERN/ALLEGATION

DETAILS – Please give full details of the incident(s) / concern(s) / allegation(s) including exactly where (venue/exact location) and when (date/time) the incident is alleged to have taken place and what is alleged or believed to have happened:

OBSERVATIONS – Please include a description / location of any visible injuries and a description of the adult’s behaviour, and their physical and emotional state:

ADULT AT RISK’S ACCOUNT OF INCIDENT – Complete this section if the adult at risk reported the incident to you, recording exactly what the adult has said has happened (including how any bruises or other injuries have been caused) and anything you have said to the adult at risk.

OTHER DETAILS –

<input type="checkbox"/> Tick here if you have continued on a separate sheet. Ensure that you have attached the sheet to this document.
ALLEGED ABUSER – Do we have the name and any contact details of the alleged abuser? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Name:
Address:
Post Code:
Telephone Number:

INCIDENT REPORT FORM (Continued)	
SECTION D – REPORTING OF INCIDENT	
Are carers aware of the concerns or allegations?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, how did they become aware?	
Is the alleged abuser aware of the concerns/allegations?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, how did they become aware?	
Have the Local Authority safeguarding helpdesk been informed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If so, who did you speak to:	
At what time did you speak to them: Case reference number:	
Have the police been informed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If so, who did you speak to:	
At what time did you speak to them:	
Case reference number;	

SECTION E – YOUR DETAILS	
Your name:	
Your address:	

Contact telephone number – daytime	
Contact telephone number – evening	
Record your decision and reasons to share or not share information	
Signature:	
Date:	

SECTION F – ADULT AT RISK’S CONSENT	
Is the adult aware of the reporting of this concern? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do they consent to this concern being reported onward to the Safeguarding Officer? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do they consent to this concern being reported onward to the Local Authority Safeguarding Helpdesk? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Please complete here any further information in respect of the adult’s wishes:	

This form must now be passed confidentially to your Safeguarding Champion or in their extended absence to your group’s chair.

Please be aware of your responsibility for data protection