

Safeguarding Policy

This policy is about safeguarding children and vulnerable adults with whom Assessment Services or those acting on our behalf, come into contact.

Scope of policy

This policy relates to all situations in both UK and international in which Assessment Services staff, Assessors, contractors and suppliers instructed by and acting on Assessment Services's behalf, come into contact with children and vulnerable adults.

Policy statement

In several of our activities Assessment Services may come into contact with those who are vulnerable, perhaps because of their age, physical or mental ability or ill health. We are responsible for ensuring that children and other vulnerable adults are not harmed in any way through contact with ASSESSMENT SERVICES. We have a legal duty to act prudently and this means that we will take all reasonable steps within our power to ensure the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding means:

- taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to the welfare of children and vulnerable adults are minimised
- where there are concerns about children and vulnerable adults' welfare, taking immediate and appropriate action to address those concerns.

A child in the UK (as agreed by England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland) can be defined as:

- anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

A "vulnerable adult" can be defined as:

- an individual aged 18+ who may be in need of care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness. For these reasons, the individual may need safeguarding services to protect them against significant harm or exploitation.

Examples of this may include adults with learning difficulties, mental health problems, older people or individuals with a physical disability or impairment.

Abuse is defined as, a form of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable person. Abuse may be caused by neglect, the infliction of harm or by the failure to act to prevent harm. Abuse may occur within the family setting, an institutional (by professionals and peers) or community setting. This may be inflicted by those known to them, or more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet).

Any concerns should be raised as soon as possible, with the Assessment Services safeguarding officer as outlined by the procedures in this policy.

Safeguarding Officer

The Safeguarding Officer for Assessment Services is: Lorna Bainbridge (HR/Quality Manager)

How Assessment Services will implement this policy

Wherever Assessment Services staff, Assessors, contractors and suppliers instructed by and acting on Assessment Services's behalf are required to have direct and supervised contact with children we will require them to make sure that they are accompanied at all times by a responsible adult representing that centre. If no accompanying adult is present the member of staff or Assessors must not proceed with any activity involving unsupervised contact with children.

Assessment Services will implement Safeguards against poor practice, harm and abuse to protect vulnerable adults. Staff, Assessors and Contractors will be provided clear information about how to report issues such as bullying and abuse and provided any necessary support in doing so.

Wherever Assessment Services staff, Assessors, contractors and suppliers instructed by and acting on Assessment Services's behalf are required to have direct and possibly unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults, Assessment Services will recruit or appoint staff or contractors who are deemed suitable to work with children and vulnerable adults, based on their declarations of unspent and exempt convictions. We will not knowingly place an employee in a position that causes him or her to come into contact with children where the employee has been accused and/or convicted of crimes against children, child abuse, or child neglect.

A communication will be issued instructing all staff, our Assessors, contractors and relevant suppliers to read this policy. Staff, Assessors and contractors found in breach of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. Suppliers may be subject to legal action.

We will fully comply with all relevant legislation in responding to a breach of this policy. Breaches will be reported to the appropriate authorities. We will maintain a full record of any reported incidents or suspicions, including the procedures followed, the feedback received and to whom the case was referred.

What to do if you suspect abuse

Any concerns should be discussed with the Safeguarding Officer which will be recorded and if a referral is needed it will be made within 24 hours using the format provided below.

Compile a report about the incident, marking it "CONFIDENTIAL" and send it to the nominated Safeguarding Officer using the email address lorna.bainbridge@assessmentsservices.com In the report include:

- *Name of person reporting the incident*
- *Position of person reporting the incident*
- *Place of work of person reporting the incident*
- *Contact phone number of person reporting the incident*
- *Name of child or vulnerable adult*
- *Address/ phone number of child or vulnerable adult*
- *Date of birth of child or vulnerable adult*
- *Other relevant details (for example, family circumstances of a child)*
- *Parent/ Guardian/ Carer details*
- *Date and time of incident*
- *Details of the incident/ allegations/ suspicions*
- *Details of any action(s) taken to date*

The Safeguarding Officer will consider any report, seeking legal advice where necessary, and will take action which may involve referral of the incident to the appropriate authorities within 24 hours. If the Safeguarding Officer considers that there is any immediate danger,

then immediate action will be taken. The Safeguarding Officer will report any allegations involving children and vulnerable adults to the children's services and concerns about staff behaviour will be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

The Safeguarding Officer will inform the person reporting the incident that action has been taken. The Safeguarding Officer will not discuss the incident further, except for clarification. If any assessors have any concerns about the action being taken, they can escalate issues to the AA Relations and Development team.

Support will be made available if a disclosing member of staff is distressed by an incident or the reporting of it.

The Safeguarding Officer will keep all sensitive information secure, including dates and details of the referral, the feedback received, the procedures followed and the outcome of advice given by Social Services, as appropriate.

Useful contacts		
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	www.nspcc.org.uk
ChildLine	0800 1111	www.childline.org.uk
Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre	+44 (0)870 000 3344	http://ceop.police.uk/
The National Children's Bureau	020 7843 6000	www.ncb.org.uk
Disclosure and Barring Service	08718 727 800	http://www.disclosuresdbs.co.uk/
Churches Child Protection Advisory Service	0845 120 4550	https://thirtyoneeight.org/
Ofsted	0300 123 1231	www.ofsted.gov.uk
Disability Rights UK	Tel: 020 7250 8181	http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/
MENCAP	Tel: 020 7454 0454	http://www.mencap.org.uk/
Respond	Tel: 0207 383 0700	http://www.respond.org.uk/