

1.Children Safeguarding Policy

Purpose of this policy

Reading Family Aid and its partners believe that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To give clear guidance so we can protect children and young people who take part in events and activities offered by Reading Family Aid and their partners. This includes children of adults who access these services.
- To provide volunteers and anyone working on our behalf with the overarching principles that guide our approach to protecting children from harm.

Who this policy applies to?

Safeguarding is everyone's business. This policy applies to all volunteers and anyone working on behalf of the charity, including any contractors or partner organisations

A 'child' means: pre-birth to 18 years old, or up to 25 years old for a child or young person with special needs or disability.

Legal Framework

Reading Family Aid owes a legal obligation to keeping children safe from harm. This policy has been drawn up based on law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

Children Act 1989
United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
Data protection Act 2018
Human Rights Act 1998
Sexual Offences Act 2003
Childrens Act 2004
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
Children and Families Act 2014
Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) code of practice 0 – 25 years – Statuary guidance of organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities;

HM Government 2014.

Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015

Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government 2018.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, race, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, level of dependency, community needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, carers, parents and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of young people.

What is child abuse and neglect, and how to recognise it?

Child abuse and neglect is a violation of a child or young person's human and civil rights. It can be one single act or multiple acts. Anyone can be an abuser, even other volunteers. Someone abusing a child or young person is often known to the child or young person, such as a person in a position of trust, more rarely it may be a complete stranger.

Children can experience more than one type of abuse, which can have serious and long-lasting impacts on their lives. By understanding what child abuse and neglect is and how to recognise it, you can help prevent it happening and report it if you see or hear about it.

See Appendix 6 for the most common types of child abuse and neglect and how to recognise them. If you are unsure, you should speak with the Safeguarding Trustee.

How you might become aware of an issue:

- a. A child or young person may tell you directly.
- b. A child or young person may tell you indirectly by making ambiguous statements suggesting something is wrong, or they may draw pictures or write letters.
- c. You might notice something about the child or young person's behaviour or see an injury (see Appendix 6)
- d. You might hear about something from someone else, such as another volunteer, family member or member of the public.
- e. You might have concerns about the behaviour, words, actions of another person, such as a volunteer, family member or member of the public and how they are behaving towards the child or young person.

If you are concerned, **let the safeguarding Trustee know.**

What to do if a child tells you about abuse or neglect:

In a situation where a child discloses abuse, follow these steps:

- **Listen carefully to the child.** Give your full attention to the child or young person and keep your body language open and encouraging. Avoid commenting on the matter or showing reactions like shock or disbelief which could cause the child to retract or stop talking.
- **Let them know they've done the right thing.** Reassurance can make a big impact on a child who may have been keeping the abuse secret.
- **Tell them it's not their fault.** Abuse is never the child's fault and they need to know this.
- **Say you will take them seriously.** A child could keep abuse secret in fear they won't be taken seriously. They've spoken out because they want help and trust that someone will listen to and support them.
- **Don't talk to the alleged abuser.** Confronting the alleged abuser about what the child's told you could make the situation a lot worse for the child.
- **Explain what you'll do next.** If age appropriate, explain to the child that this will need to be reported to someone who will be able to help.
- **Don't delay reporting the abuse.** The sooner the abuse is reported after the child discloses the better. Report as soon as possible to the DSO so details are fresh in the mind and action can be taken quickly.
- **Don't promise you'll keep it a secret.** Explain that you need to share what they've told you with someone who will be able to help.
- **If a child or young person needs confidential help** and advice direct them to Childline. Calls to 0800 1111 are free and children can also [contact Childline](#).

It's important to keep accurate and detailed notes on any concerns you have about a child. You will need to share these with the Safeguarding Trustee. Use the reporting form in Appendix 5.

How to report a Safeguarding Concern

Anyone concerned about a child or young person must:

- If a child is in **immediate danger**, **contact the police immediately on 999.**
- Then contact your safeguarding trustee.

The Safeguarding Trustee is Vivienne Simpson. You can contact her at Vivienesimpson@readingfamilyaid.org

- If a child is **not** in immediate danger:
 - Complete the reporting form and tell the Safeguarding Trustee on the same day.

Always report your concerns, however small you may think they are. You do not need to investigate but you have a responsibility to pass on your concerns to the Safeguarding Trustee.

The Safeguarding Trustee will:

- Receive your form and may ask to clarify anything that is unclear. This is done in part 2 of the reporting form.
- Assess again if there is an immediate risk of harm to the child, if so the Safeguarding Trustee will contact the police on 999, and ensure the child is safe if they are at a Reading Family Aid activity.
- If the allegation relates to a volunteer, or anyone working on behalf of Reading Family Aid then follow next section, “Allegations against volunteers or anyone volunteering on behalf of Reading Family Aid”.
- Contact Children’s Single Point of Access (CSPOA) on advice on whether a referral should be made (see section headed “Key external contact numbers and resources”).
- Report to Reading Family Aid’s Board of Trustees and discuss next steps.
- If further support is needed contact NSPCC on 0808 800 500
- Ensure the reporting forms are kept secure on a password protected computer.

Allegations against volunteers or anyone volunteering on behalf of Reading Family Aid.

If the allegations or concerns relate to a person who is a volunteer or in any way working on behalf of Reading Family Aid which can include partner organisations, then this process must also be followed by Safeguarding Trustee:

- a. Report to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on the same day and take advice.
- b. Consider suspending the individual from volunteering immediately whilst the investigation takes place. Inform the individual but be careful not to disclose anything that might jeopardise the investigation or place anyone at risk. If you are unsure, seek advice from the police or LADO. A Reading Family Aid Trustee must be involved in any investigation.
- c. If the allegations are against someone who is from a partner organisation, such as a group who is co-delivering the activity, contact the partner organisation to report it to them and ensure they conduct an internal investigation too.
- d. If the allegations are confirmed, this amounts to gross misconduct and will amount to termination of volunteering.
- e. If the person has a DBS certificate and the allegations are confirmed, let the DBS service know – this is called the ‘duty to refer’.

Key external contact numbers and resources

Children's Single Point of Access (CSPOA)

0118 9373641 (Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm)

This includes all Child Protection, Early Help and Disabled Children’s Services.

Secure webform: www.reading.gov.uk/childrensreferralfom

Secure E-mail: cspoa@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

If the child lives in a different local authority area, then contact the relevant team:

Wokingham Borough Council - Referral & Assessment Team - 0118 9088002

West Berkshire Council - Contact Advice and Assessment Service (CAAS) -
01635 503190

Bracknell Forest - MASH - 01344 352005

Slough Borough Council - MASH - 01753 875362

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead - MASH - 01628 683150

Out of Hours: Berkshire Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Team 01344 786 543 This is for emergency child protection referrals between 5pm and 9am, 365 days of the year.

Allegations about volunteer, staff, partner organisation's volunteers or contractors contact: LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

Provides advice and management of allegations against members of staff and volunteers between 9am and 5pm during weekdays (except public holidays). Contact the LADO for the local authority area in which the child lives:

Reading LADO lado@brighterfuturesforchildren.org 0118 937 3555

Wokingham LADO - 0118 9088002

West Berkshire LADO – 01635 503090

Bracknell LADO (Contacted via MASH team) - 01344 352005

Other sources of Support & Advice:

NSPCC - 0808 800 5000

ChildLine - 0800 1111

Duty to Refer under the DBS service - 03000 200 190

Reading Voluntary Action, Advice Service 0118 9372273 – for support for trustees

Guidelines for interaction with children on outings

The following guidelines apply to all volunteers whether acting in an unpaid capacity, a partner organisation or any other capacity on behalf of Reading Family Aid.

- Always avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Do not take a child alone in a car, however short the journey.
- Do not take a child to the toilet.
- Always try to ensure that there is more than one adult present when you are with children or young people. If you find you are in a situation where you are alone with a child make sure that others can clearly observe you.
- Maintain appropriate relationships with a child or young person. Make sure any contact is appropriate and in relation to the work of the project only.
- Do not divulge personal contact details such as email address or telephone

number. Encourage them instead to use official Reading Family Aid information and contact details.

- Do not befriend children or young people on social media. Refer them instead to Reading Family Aid's social media pages.
- Do not make gifts of money or items to children or young people. If a child needs something, let the Trustees know.
- Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted.
- Do not make inappropriate promises to children or young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality.
- If a child or vulnerable adult makes any kind of accusation regarding a volunteer, you should report this immediately to the Safeguarding Trustee.
- Remember that those who abuse children and vulnerable adults can be of any age (including other children and vulnerable adults), gender, ethnic background or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action taking place.
- Good practice includes valuing and respecting children as individuals, and the adult modelling of appropriate conduct - which would exclude bullying, aggressive behaviour, racism, sectarianism or sexism.

Training

Trustees and committee members are required to undertake universal safeguarding training every two years.

2. Adult Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Reading Family Aid is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and accepts our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all adults involved in the organisation in accordance with the Care Act 2014.

Reading Family Aid's safeguarding adults policy and procedures apply to all individuals involved in the organisation.

Reading Family Aid will encourage and support partner organisations to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality as set out in this safeguarding adults policy and procedures.

Principles

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

- All adults, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender, race, religion or belief, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, gender status have the right to be protected from abuse and poor practice and to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.
- Reading Family Aid will seek to ensure that its activities are inclusive and make reasonable adjustments for any ability, disability or impairment. We will also commit to continuous development, monitoring and review.
- The rights, dignity and worth of all adults will always be respected.
- We recognise that ability and disability can change over time, such that some adults may be additionally vulnerable to abuse, in particular those adults with care and support needs
- We all have a shared responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of all adults and will act appropriately and report concerns whether these concerns arise within Reading Family Aid, for example inappropriate behaviour of a volunteer or in the wider community.
- All allegations will be taken seriously and responded to quickly in line with this Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.
- Reading Family Aid recognises the role and responsibilities of the statutory agencies in safeguarding adults and is committed to complying with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Adults Boards.

The six principles of adult safeguarding

The Care Act 2014 sets out the following principles that should underpin safeguarding of adults:

- **Empowerment** - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
"I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens."

- **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
“I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help.”
- **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
“I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest, as I see them and they will only get involved as much as needed.”
- **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
“I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want.”
- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
“I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me.”
- **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.
“I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they.”

Making Safeguarding personal

‘Making safeguarding personal’ means that adult safeguarding should be person-led and outcome-focussed. It engages the person in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control, as well as improving quality of life, well-being and safety.

Wherever possible discuss safeguarding concerns with the adult to get their view of what they would like to happen and keep them involved in the safeguarding process, seeking their consent to share information outside of the organisation where necessary.

Wellbeing Principle

The concept of wellbeing is threaded throughout the Care Act and it is one that is relevant to adult safeguarding in sport and activity. Wellbeing is different for each of us however the Act sets out broad categories that contribute to our sense of wellbeing. By keeping these themes in mind, we can all ensure that adult participants can take part in our services and activities fully.

- Personal dignity (including treatment of the individual with respect)
- Physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Protection from abuse and neglect
- Control by the individual over their day-to-day life (including over care and support provided and the way they are provided)
- Participation in work, education, training or recreation
- Social and economic wellbeing
- Domestic, family and personal domains
- Suitability of the individual’s living accommodation
- The individual’s contribution to society.

Legislation

The practices and procedures within this policy are based on the principles contained within the UK legislation and Government Guidance and have been developed to complement the Safeguarding Adults Boards policy and procedures. They take the following into consideration:

- The Care Act 2014
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 1998

Definitions

To assist working through and understanding this policy a number of key definitions need to be explained:

Adult is anyone aged 18 or over.

Adult at Risk is a person aged 18 or over who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs);
and;
- Is experiencing, **or** is at risk of, abuse or neglect;
and;
- 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.

Adult in need of care and support is determined by a range of factors including personal characteristics, factors associated with their situation, or environment and social factors.

Naturally, a person's disability or frailty does not mean that they will inevitably experience harm or abuse.

In the context of safeguarding adults, the likelihood of an adult in need of care and support experiencing harm or abuse should be determined by considering a range of social, environmental and clinical factors, not merely because they may be defined by one or more of the above descriptors.

In recent years there has been a marked shift away from using the term 'vulnerable' to describe adults potentially at risk from harm or abuse.

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons.

See Appendix 6 for further explanations.

Adult safeguarding is protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Capacity refers to the ability to make a decision at a particular time, for example when under considerable stress. The starting assumption must always be that a person has the capacity to make a decision unless it can be established that they lack capacity (MCA 2005). See Appendix 6 for guidance and information.

What to do if you have a concern, or if someone raises concerns with you.

It is not your responsibility to decide whether an adult has been abused. It is, however, everyone's responsibility to respond to and report concerns.

If you are concerned someone is in immediate danger, contact the police on 999 straight away. Where you suspect that a crime is being committed, you must involve the police.

If you have concerns and or you are told about possible or alleged abuse, poor practice or wider welfare issues you must report this to the Reading Family Aid Trustee responsible for safeguarding.

When raising your concern with the Safeguarding Trustee, remember Making Safeguarding Personal. It is good practice to seek the adult's views on what they would like to happen next and to inform the adult you will be passing on your concern.

It is important when considering your concern that you keep the person informed about any decisions and action taken, and always consider their needs and wishes.

Allegations against volunteers or anyone volunteering on behalf of Reading Family Aid

If the allegations or concerns relate to a person who is a volunteer or in any way working on behalf of reading Family Aid which can include partner organisations, then this process must also be followed by Safeguarding Trustee:

- Report to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on the same day and take advice.
- Consider suspending the individual from volunteering immediately whilst the investigation takes place. Inform the individual but be careful not to disclose anything that might jeopardise the investigation or place anyone at risk. If you are unsure, seek advice from the police or LADO. A Reading Family Aid Trustee must be involved in any investigation.
- If the allegations are against someone who is from a partner organisation, such as a group who is co-delivering the activity, contact the partner organisation to report it to them and ensure they conduct an internal

investigation too.

- If the allegations are confirmed, this amounts to gross misconduct and will amount to termination of volunteering.
- If the person has a DBS certificate and the allegations are confirmed, let the DBS service know – this is called the ‘duty to refer’.

Make a note of your concerns.

Make a note of what the person has said using his or her own words as soon as practicable. Complete an Incident Form and submit to the Safeguarding Trustee.

Remember to make safeguarding personal. Discuss your safeguarding concerns with the adult, obtain their view of what they would like to happen, but inform them it’s your duty to pass on your concerns to your lead safeguarding officer.

Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about.

Take care to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. It is important that the information you have is accurate.

Be mindful of the need to be confidential at all times. This information must only be shared with your Safeguarding Trustee and others on a need-to-know basis.

If the matter is urgent and relates to the immediate safety of an adult at risk then contact the emergency services immediately.

Reading Family Aid is committed to having the following in place:

A safeguarding Trustee to produce and disseminate guidance to support the policy and procedures.

The Safeguarding Trustee is Vivienne Simpson. Her phone number is 07894446911. Her e-mail is VivienneSimpson@ReadingFamilyAid.org

Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse or poor practice against volunteers. The Safeguarding Trustee will deal with issues and manage concerns.

Arrangements to work effectively with other organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults, including arrangements for sharing information.

Appropriate whistle blowing procedures and an open and inclusive culture that enables safeguarding and equality and diversity issues to be addressed.

Clear codes of conduct are in place for volunteers.

Good practice, poor practice and abuse

It can be difficult to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental.

It is not the responsibility of any individual involved in Reading Family Aid to make judgements regarding whether or not abuse is taking place. However, all volunteers and trustees have the responsibility to recognise and identify poor practice and potential abuse, and act on this if they have concerns.

Good practice

Reading Family Aid expects that volunteers adopt and endorse its Code of Conduct.

Everyone should:

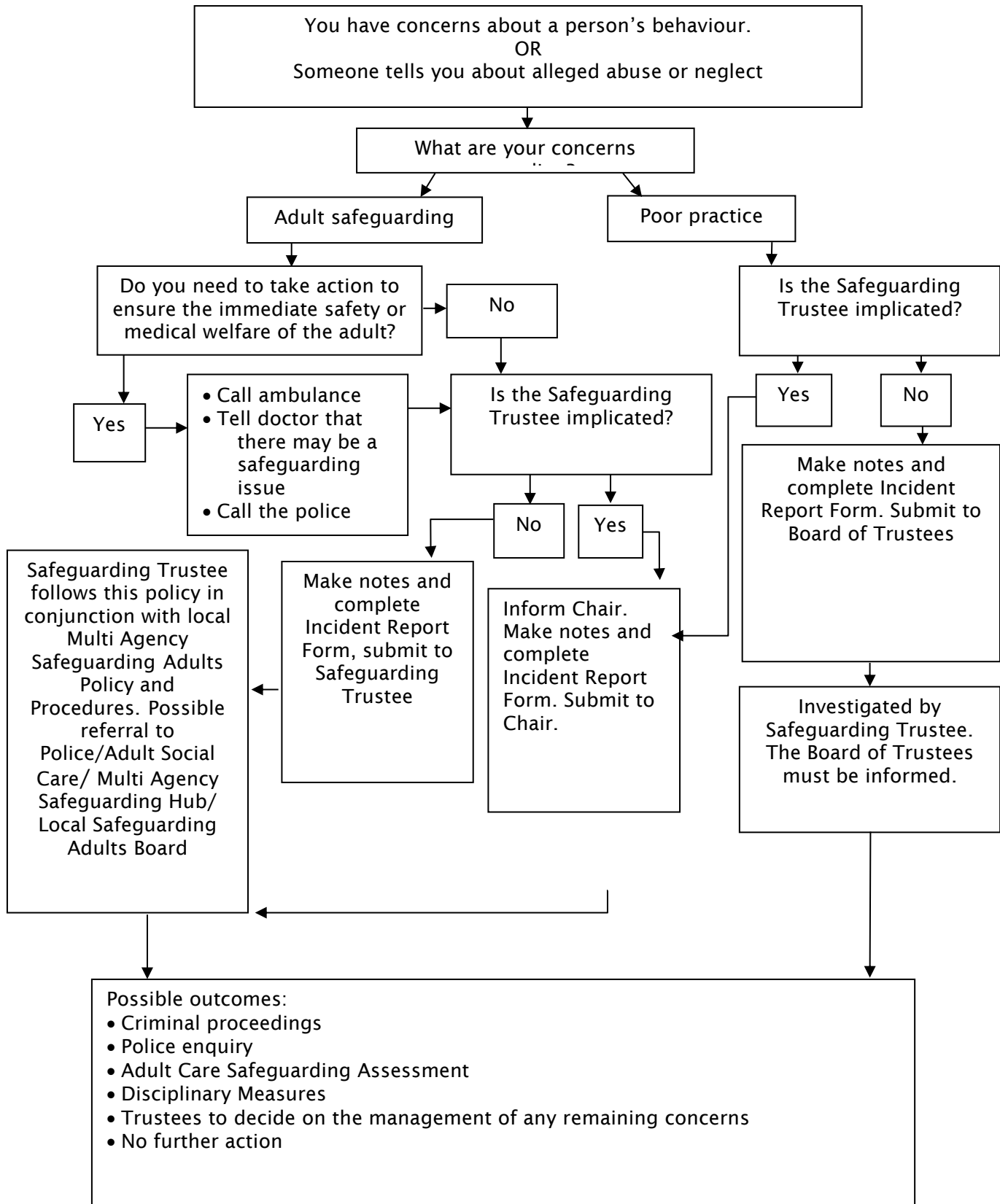
- Aim to make the experience of Reading Family Aid fun and enjoyable.
- Promote fairness
- Not tolerate the use of prohibited or illegal substances.
- Treat all adults equally and preserve their dignity.

Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies complaints and whistleblowing procedure.

Training

All Trustees and committee volunteers must complete level one Adult safeguarding training every two years.



Remember to involve the adult at risk throughout the process wherever possible and gain consent for any referrals to social care if the person has capacity