Safeguarding policy

Introduction

	We know that children and adults who use our services could be harmed by other people. They might be abused, or not looked after properly.
	Sutton Mencap's safeguarding policy sets out how we aim to protect people who use our services.
	It is a very important policy.
	We expect all our staff, volunteers and trustees to follow this policy.
	Sutton Mencap's Chief Executive, David Hobday, is the lead staff member for safeguarding.
	Claire Fionda is the lead trustee for safeguarding.

What is abuse?

	Our policy aims to protect people from being abused. There are lots of different types of abuse.

	Sometimes, abuse is where people do things that are harmful to others.
	Sometimes, people are not protected from harm. This can also be abuse.
	If people are being abused, we want to help them so that the abuse stops.
	All children under the age of 18 should be protected from abuse.
	Some adults who are seen as vulnerable should also be protected from abuse. This includes adults with a learning disability.

What will we do if we think someone is being abused?

	Our staff and volunteers are trained to look out for signs that someone is being abused.
	If staff or volunteers are concerned about abuse, they will always report it to someone who can help.
	They might talk it through with their manager or a safeguarding lead.

Sutton	If we think someone is being abused we will let social services know.
CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES	If something bad happens at Sutton Mencap, we will tell the Charity Commission and other organisations who need to know.

How do services aim to keep people safe?

	We want to make sure that our services are safe for people who attend.
	We carry out **risk assessments** to check that our activities will be safe.
	We make sure we have enough staff to keep everyone safe.
	Staff and volunteers work together to keep people safe. Staff are not usually left on their own when supporting a person on our services.
	We have clear policies on how to support people safely, which staff and volunteers must follow.
	We are very careful about how we give people medicines and how medicines are stored.

	We are very careful about how staff use their personal mobile phones. They are not to be used when supporting people.
	We involve parents when looking at how to keep children safe.
	We provide special training to staff on how to manage people with challenging behaviour. We try to make sure people don't hurt themselves or others.
	We write down any incidents that happen at Sutton Mencap. These forms are checked by managers. We let family members know about incidents.
	We check that our computer equipment is used safely, for example when people use the internet.
	We supervise visitors when they come to the building.
	We are very careful about arrangements for collecting children at the end of a session.
	We publicise our complaints policy and our safeguarding policy on our website at https://www.suttonmencap.org.uk/what-we-do/safeguarding/.

Confidentiality

	Our staff know that they must tell a manager if they are worried about someone, even if they have been asked not to say anything.
	Staff will only share concerns with people who need to know.

What sorts of things do we try to protect people from?

	We try to protect children from **sexual exploitation.**
	This is where children are persuaded to take part in sexual acts, or to share photos of themselves.
	If we think this is happening to a child, we will report it.
	We try to protect women and girls from **Female Genital Mutiliation (FGM).**
	FGM is illegal. We will report any concerns we have to the police or social services.

	We try to protect people from **extremist ideology.**
	This is where people might be persuaded to harm others for political or other reasons.
	If we are worried that people are being used in this way, we will report this to the local authorities.
	We try to protect people from **peer on peer abuse.**
	This is where one person who attends Sutton Mencap services might be abusing another service user.
	If we think this might be happening, we will work with service users and other agencies to stop it.
	We try to protect people from **forced marriage and honour killing.**
	This is where people might be told to marry someone, even if they don’t want to.

	It might also mean that people are threatened or killed if they don't do what they are told.
	If we are worried that someone is at risk of forced marriage or honour killing, we will report it.
	We try to protect people from **modern slavery** and **trafficking**.
	Slavery is where people are forced to work without pay and are unable to escape.
	They might have been trafficked, which means they were brought into the country illegally. They might then be forced to work without pay.
	If we are worried that someone has been trafficked or forced into slavery, we will report it.

Recruiting staff

	We want to do our best to make sure that the staff who work for us do not harm the people who use our services.
	This means we carry out lots of checks on people who apply for jobs at Sutton Mencap. We tell people about this when they apply for a job.

	People applying for a job with us must tell us if there are any concerns we should know about.
	At job interviews, we will try to find out what people think about children and adults with a learning disability. This might help us understand if there are any concerns.
	We will always ask for **references**. This means we will ask previous employers or other people to tell us if there are any concerns about someone.
	We will carry out checks to make sure the person is who they say they are.
	We will check to make sure the person is allowed to work for us.
	We will carry out a check with the **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).** This should help us find out if there have been any concerns raised about the person applying to work with us.

Staff training, development and supervision

	We will work with our staff to do everything we can to keep people safe.
	We will give lots of support to new staff to help them understand how to keep people safe.

	We will have lots of meetings with staff to talk about keeping people safe.
	We will provide safeguarding training to all staff and make sure that they complete it.
	All staff must read our policies and procedures, including our safeguarding policy.

Trustees

	We will carry out a **DBS check** with all our trustees.

Volunteers

	We want to do our best to make sure that any volunteers at Sutton Mencap do not harm the people who use our services.
	We will take up **references** and **DBS checks** with volunteers.
	Volunteers will receive training in safeguarding.

	We will make sure volunteers are supervised and are not left alone with people who use our services.
	We will make sure that volunteers know about our safeguarding policy.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

	We will carry out DBS checks with people before they start working or volunteering at Sutton Mencap.
	We will do a new DBS check every 3 years to make sure there are no new concerns.

Managing allegations against staff

	We will act straight away if we think a staff member or volunteer might have harmed someone at Sutton Mencap.
	We might take **disciplinary action** against the person. If the person has done something wrong, they might have to leave Sutton Mencap.
	We will also work with other people who might need to investigate whether a staff member or volunteer has harmed someone. This could mean involving the council or the police.

	If a staff member or volunteer has harmed someone at Sutton Mencap, we will let the DBS service know, so they can tell other employers.

Whistleblowing

	Sutton Mencap will always aim to deal properly with any safeguarding concerns.
	If a staff member or volunteer feels that we haven't dealt with something properly, they may decide to report this to the council or the police.
	We have a **whistleblowing policy** which explains to staff and volunteers how they can do this.

Agreeing and reviewing the safeguarding policy

	The safeguarding policy is a very important document.
	All staff and volunteers must follow the policy.
	Managers and trustees must check that the policy is being followed.

	Trustees must look at the policy every year to see if it needs updating.

This policy was las reviewed in November 2026