

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AT RISK POLICY



Last reviewed	Reviewed by	Next Review
October 2023	Bruna Boscaini	October 2024
November 2024	Bruna Boscaini	November 2025
March 2025	Vanessa Fukuda	March 2026
May 2025	Bruna Boscaini	May 2026
July 2025	Bruna Boscaini	June 2026

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of staff, volunteers, trustees and partners working on behalf of and with IRMO in relation to safeguarding adults at risk.

IRMO is committed to Safeguarding Adults in line with national legislation and relevant national and local guidelines. IRMO is committed to the principles that all adults have the right to live free from fear of harm and abuse and have their rights and choices respected.

IRMO is committed to creating a culture of zero tolerance of harm to adults, which involves the recognition of adults who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk; knowing how adult abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself; and being willing to report safeguarding concerns.

This extends to recognising and reporting harm experienced anywhere, including within our activities, within other organised community or voluntary activities, in the community, in the person's own home and in any care setting.

Safeguarding Named Staff

NAME	ROLE	PHONE	EMAIL
Angie Gomez Programme Manager - Children & Young People	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	07803 704226	angie.gomez@irmo.org.uk

Bruna Boscaini Director	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	07742 041448	bruna.boscaini@irmo.org.uk
Paola Hidalgo Finance and Operations Officer	Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Administration	07472 307016	paola.hidalgo@irmo.org.uk
Marisel Mendoza Volunteer Coordinator	Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Administration		marisel.mendoza@irmo.org.uk
Carolina Cal Trustee	Safeguarding Trustee	07568398160	carolina.cal@irmo.org.uk
The DSL, DDSL and DSO all receive emails sent to: safeguarding@irmo.org.uk			

Emergency Contacts

AGENCY	CONTACT
Lambeth Adult Care Services	020-7926-5555
Police non-emergency	101
Emergency services	999
Local Authority Designated Officer	Andrew Zachariades LADO@lambeth.gov.uk 02079264679

POLICY STATEMENT

IRMO believes everyone has the right to live free from abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status. IRMO is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution.

IRMO recognises that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and is committed to prevent abuse and neglect through safeguarding the welfare of all adults involved.

The key objectives of this policy are:

- To provide staff and volunteers with an overview of safeguarding and supporting adults at risk.

- To explain the responsibilities of IRMO and its staff, volunteers, trustees and strategic partners in relation to adults at risk.
- To provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where abuse of adults at risk arises.

DEFINITION: ADULT AT RISK

According to the [Care Act 2014](#), an adult at risk is defined as an individual aged 18 or over who:

- Has care and support needs (whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs).
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect.
- Is unable to protect themselves from the risk or experience of abuse or neglect due to their care and support needs.

This definition applies to adults who may have physical disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health conditions, sensory impairments, dementia, substance misuse issues, or other vulnerabilities that affect their ability to safeguard themselves.

The Care Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities to make enquiries when they believe an adult is at risk of harm and to take appropriate action to prevent or stop abuse or neglect.

TYPES OF ABUSE

Abuse is a violation of a person's human rights or dignity by someone else. There are many kinds of abuse, some of which are listed below:

- **Physical Abuse:** This may include hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.
- **Sexual Abuse:** This may include rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented, could not consent or was pressured into consenting.
- **Psychological Abuse:** This may include emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- **Financial or Material Abuse:** This may include theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Neglect or Acts of Omission:** This may include ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health care, social care, education services or misuse of medication, adequate nutrition or heating.

- **Institutional Abuse:** This can sometimes happen in residential homes, nursing homes or hospitals when people are mistreated because of poor or inadequate care, neglect and poor practice that affects the whole of that service.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING

In the safeguarding of adults, IRMO is guided by the six key principles set out in The Care Act 2014. IRMO aims to demonstrate and promote these six principles in our work:

- **Empowerment:** Adults are encouraged and supported to make their own decisions and give informed consent
- **Prevention:** It is better to take action before harm occurs by raising awareness and taking proactive measures
- **Proportionality:** Responses to safeguarding concerns should be appropriate and proportionate to the level of risk
- **Protection:** Support and representation should be provided to those in greatest need
- **Partnership:** Local services should work together to prevent, detect, and respond to abuse and neglect
- **Accountability:** Transparency and accountability are key in delivering safeguarding practices

These principles ensure that safeguarding is person-centred, preventative, and effective, putting individuals at the heart of the process while promoting safety, dignity, and independence.

STATEMENT OF VALUES

The following values will inform and guide all work with adults at risk:

- **Privacy:** the right of individuals to be left alone or undisturbed and free from intrusion or public attention into their affairs.
- **Dignity:** all people will be treated with respect. Each individual's unique characteristics and intrinsic value will be recognised.
- **Independence:** the right to act and think without reference to another person.
- **Choice:** the opportunity to make both small and more significant life choices, with assistance as appropriate to understand context and options; the opportunity to make choices in the individual's own interest, exercising the choice to take risks.
- **Rights:** the maintenance of all entitlements associated with citizenship, including full participation in the life of the community.

- **Fulfilment:** the realisation of personal aspirations and abilities in all aspects of daily life; the development of competence in valued, meaningful skills and attributes.

THE ROLE OF STAFF, TRUSTEES, VOLUNTEERS AND STRATEGIC PARTNERS

All staff, volunteers, trustees and partners working on behalf of and with IRMO have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of adults at risk and must be familiar with and adhere to the Safeguarding Policies. Staff must:

- Remain vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation and report any concerns promptly in accordance with IRMO's safeguarding reporting procedures
- Treat all individuals with dignity and respect, ensuring a person-centred approach to safeguarding
- Maintain confidentiality while recognising the need to share safeguarding concerns with designated staff or external agencies when necessary
- Ensure that their actions and behaviours do not put adults at risk of harm

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

When dealing with initial allegations of abuse the interests and welfare of the adult at risk are paramount, all employees must:

1. Listen carefully and ensure the adult at risk adult knows that you are taking what s/he says seriously
2. Stay calm
3. Reassure the person that s/he is doing the right thing in telling you
4. Explain what you are going to do next
5. Do not appear shocked, horrified, disgusted or angry
6. Show sympathy and concern but do not make comments or judgments
7. Do not give sweeping reassurances
8. Do not confront the alleged perpetrator. If the alleged perpetrator is a colleague, do not mention the allegation to any person other than the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy - see contact details at the end of this document
9. Do not put pressure on the individual for details
10. Do not promise to keep secrets
11. Write a factual and chronological account of what you have heard

REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

All staff and volunteers should be clear that every allegation/suspicion of abuse involving an adult at risk must be treated seriously and recorded using the Safeguarding Concern feature My Concern. This includes situations where the alleged perpetrator is a colleague or another adult. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will receive an alert, however, if the concern is urgent you may also wish to consider contacting the DSL or Deputy personally.

The individual's consent should generally be sought prior to making a referral or report. If they do not want a report to be made, this should be respected, unless there are justifiable reasons to override their decision, including:

- If there is risk to other adults or children
- If the abuse or neglect involves a serious crime
- If the individual lacks the mental capacity to make an informed decision about reporting. [The Mental Capacity Act 2005](#) requires a decision to be made in their best interests
- If the adult is being coerced, threatened, or manipulated into remaining silent
- If failing to intervene would result in serious harm or death
- If there is a statutory reporting requirement

If their wishes are being overridden, explain clearly why the decision is being made, involve the individual as much as possible in the process and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

In the unlikely event that it is not possible to report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, the relevant social care team, the police or the Care Quality Commission (if the abused person lives in a residential unit) should be approached.

If the adult at risk is in hospital at the time the alleged abuse first comes to light, then the hospital social work team should be notified in the first instance. This includes adults at risk being treated in Accident and Emergency Departments.

IRMO PREVENT POLICY

The Government, through its PREVENT programme, has highlighted how some adults may be vulnerable to exploitation and radicalisation and involvement in terrorism.

Definitions

Radicalisation – ‘the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism’ (Prevent Strategy)

Extremism – ‘vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect tolerance of different faith and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members in our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas’ (Prevent)

Signs and indicators of radicalisation may include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Articulating support for violent extremist causes or leaders
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- Possessing violent extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives to explain personal disadvantage
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour
- Distributing extremist literature and documentation
- Use of extremist or ‘hate’ terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others

Reporting Concerns

If staff or volunteers have concerns that an individual they are working with might be at risk of extremism or radicalisation, they should contact the DSL as the Prevent Lead, or the DDSL in their absence. The DSL will report any concerns to:

- The Prevent Education Officer in Lambeth, Lydia Nixon: LNixon@lambeth.gov.uk or prevent@lambeth.gov.uk
- The Counter Extremism Coordinator in Lambeth, Rupert Sutton: RSutton@lambeth.gov.uk or call 020 7926 7025

ROLE OF THE DSL OR DEPUTY

The role of the DSL or Deputy is to support the member of staff, trustee, volunteer or partner involved with the incident and to ensure the correct procedures are followed.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

All the staff and volunteers who are entrusted with adults at risk and have regular contact with them in the course of his/her duties are required to attend interviews and provide references, as detailed in IRMO's recruitment, selection and induction procedures.

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will also be obtained for staff, volunteers and trustees recruited to certain positions. Eligibility to apply for a DBS check and the appropriate level of check can be found in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All staff and volunteers should be given details of this policy as part of their induction and they should participate in training courses on the protection of adults at risk where available. Staff and volunteers should also have the health and safety procedures explained in detail to them as part of their induction. As part of IRMO's induction process, all staff and volunteers are required to:

- Complete the [Safeguarding Level 1](#) online training delivered by the Lambeth Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP)
- Complete the Lambeth [Unconscious Bias Training](#)
- Complete the Prevent duty training: Learn how to support people susceptible to radicalisation [Course 1: Awareness Course](#)

Please speak to your line manager for access to further training and development. This will be arranged by the DSL.