



**SAFEGUARDING BOARD**  
**ISLE OF MAN**

# Roles and Responsibilities

Isle of Man Safeguarding Board  
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# **Combined Children and Vulnerable Adult's Agency Roles and Responsibilities**

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## **1. Introduction**

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This policy outlines the main responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare and best interests of children and vulnerable adults which apply to all statutory organisations and agencies, voluntary, charity, and faith- based organisations, private sector and professionals and practitioners, who work with children and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding is a collective responsibility for all professionals working across a multi-agency arena and is essentially about creating relationships with those who we are working with.

Relationships between professionals, children, vulnerable adults and the families that we work with do not exist in isolation with one another, they are interrelated and exert influences on one another. Working together involves practitioners developing and maintaining professional relationships in often unique, complex and challenging situations.

Not only is it crucial to develop positive professional working relationships, it is also important to have an awareness and appreciation of the role of your own and other organisations which is essential for effective collaboration and partnership working. It is the responsibility of all individuals who work within health and social care settings to practice in a way that will help prevent abuse, and empower people to have the autonomy to have as much control over their lives as possible, rather than forging a dependence on services.

## **2. Statutory Duties**

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The Safeguarding Act 2018 created a legislative requirement to have an Isle of Man Safeguarding Board and for policies and procedures to be produced to guide multi-agency practitioners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

Organisations should work together within the parameters of the Safeguarding Board and the information sharing protocol. A coordinated approach should be taken to ensure effective safeguarding arrangements with an obligation to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. This is supported by the duty on all relevant safeguarding bodies set out in Part 1, Para 4 of the Safeguarding Act 2018 to co-operate with the Safeguarding Board and its objectives and functions.

All Government, third and private sector services that provide services to children and vulnerable adults should hold the safeguarding responsibilities set out in the Safeguarding Act 2018 most importantly:

- a) The duty to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults; and
- b) The duty to co-operate.

### **3. Organisational Arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children and Vulnerable Adults.**

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Relevant safeguarding bodies should have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. There should be:

- A clear line of accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults;
- A senior level lead with the required knowledge, skills and expertise who are sufficiently qualified and experienced to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements;
- A culture of listening to children and vulnerable adults, taking into account their views, wishes and feelings and respecting their decisions and choices, both individually and during the development of services;
- Clear whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably referenced in staff training codes of conduct, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults to be addressed; - [See Whistle- blowing Procedure](#)
- Clear escalation policies for staff to follow when their safeguarding concerns are not being addressed within their organisation or by other agencies; [See Escalation Procedure](#)
- Arrangements which clearly set out the processes for sharing information, with other professionals and with the Safeguarding Board. [See Information Sharing Protocol](#)
- A designated professional lead whose role is to support other professionals in their agencies to recognise the needs of children and vulnerable adults, including protection from possible abuse or neglect. Designated professional roles should always be explicitly defined in job descriptions. Professionals should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively;
- Safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children and vulnerable adults, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check. Note: All staff who work with Children or Vulnerable Adults should hold a DBS certificate; [See Safer Recruitment Procedure](#)
- All individuals within organisations who work with Children and Vulnerable Adults should ensure compliance with the Safeguarding Board's policies and procedures;

- Access to regular training, for example face-to face, online and briefings to ensure competencies are attained commensurate to their role and any Regulatory Body they are a part of;
- Appropriate supervision and support for staff, including a thorough induction programme for all new staff who should follow relevant professional guidance;
- Creating a culture of safety, equality and protection within the services they provide.
- It is important to create an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role;
- All professionals should have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they have knowledge, skills and expertise that improve over time.

#### **4. People in Positions of Trust**

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Organisations and agencies working with children, vulnerable adults and families should have clear policies and guidelines for dealing with allegations against people who work with children and vulnerable adults. Such policies should make a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern or about the quality of care, professional practice or a complaint.

- An allegation may relate to a person who works with children or vulnerable adults who has:
  - Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or may have harmed them;
  - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or vulnerable adult;
  - Behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults;
  - Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.
- Allegations against people who work with children and vulnerable adults must not be dealt with in isolation. Any necessary action to address welfare concerns in relation to a child or vulnerable adult should be taken without delay and in a coordinated manner.
- The Managing Allegations Strategy Meeting, convened in response to allegations will be chaired by the Designated Officer who is based within Children and Families Division or Adult Social Care. The Designated Officer is responsible for overseeing the ongoing investigations. Advice and guidance should be provided to employers and voluntary organisations, throughout the process of the investigation up to the final outcome meeting. Monitoring the progress of cases is important to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, and are consistent with a thorough and fair process. [See Managing Allegations against staff \(MASM\) Procedure for further information and guidance.](#)

#### **5. Individual Organisational Responsibilities**

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The Key duties that fall on each organisation are set out as follows;

### **5.1 Children and Families Division**

The Children and Families Division have a number of specific statutory duties; to assess, plan, review and organise the delivery of services for children and young people, and when required make arrangements for their care.

Where a child has, or is likely to be suffering significant harm, qualified social workers, their managers and other practitioners will work in conjunction with the police and other organisations to undertake an enquiry under Section 46 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2001.

Taking a coordinated approach and working together with agencies whilst promoting transparency and a solution focused approach should make a difference and help children and young people achieve their very best outcomes.

Strengthening families to work alongside practitioners could mean that additional resources are required and need to be provided. It is the role of the social worker, managers and other practitioners within Children and Families to make decisions, take action and seek appropriate resources to meet the needs of the children and young people that they work with, particularly where safety and protection needs are evident to ensure effective safeguarding arrangements are in place.

### **5.2 Children and Family Court**

The role of the Court Welfare Officer is to safeguard and promote the welfare of individual children who are the subject of family court proceedings. It achieves this by providing independent social work advice to the court. The appointment of a Court Welfare Officer from the Department of Home Affairs is more frequent in Private rather than Public Law Proceedings. Where a Court Welfare Officer is appointed, they will become party to proceedings. (see chapter 5.7)

A social worker, their manager and other practitioners within the service will usually represent the Children and Families Division within Public Law Proceedings.

A Guardian who is appointed by the Court has a statutory right in public law cases to access records relating to the child concerned and any application under the Children and Young Persons Act 2001. That power also extends to other records that relate to the child and the wider functions of the department, or records held by an authorised body that relate to that child. Where a Guardian has been appointed by the court as a child's Guardian Section (102) Children and Young Persons Act 2001 and the matter before the court relates to specified proceedings, they should be invited to all formal planning meetings convened by Children and Families Division in respect of the child. This includes statutory reviews of children who are accommodated or Looked After, Child Protection Conferences and relevant Adoption Panel Meetings.

### **5.3 Youth Justice Team**

The Youth Offending social worker is based in the Initial Response Team (IRT) within the Children and Families Division (YJT) and is responsible for interventions and statutory court disposals.

Adult protection is fundamentally about managing risks relating to the safety and wellbeing of a vulnerable adult whilst ensuring that the principles of making safeguarding personal (MSP) is embedded into the approach and actions of staff.

Responding to concerns requires a variety of responses including internal and external agencies such as the police, health and regulatory authorities to assist with assessing and carry out investigations when abuse and neglect is suspected. In all cases consideration regarding capacity is integral to the adult protection process when making decisions and planning for services. It should be assumed that individuals have capacity to make their own decisions and if required they are provided with practical help and support before they are considered not to be able to do so.

When services are provided to vulnerable adults who have children of their own, practitioners must not lose sight of their responsibility to children who may be in need of support, have complex needs or require safety and protection.

Children may be at greater risk of harm or be in need of additional help in families where the adults have mental health problems, misuse drugs or alcohol, are in a violent relationship or have complex needs or have learning difficulties.

Should any safeguarding concerns emerge then Children and Families Division must be notified according to procedure. Adult Social Care Services should always liaise with Children and Families Division to ensure that there is a joined-up approach when co working with families and when carrying out assessments.

Effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is essential for effective identification, assessment and service provision. [See Information Sharing Protocol 2021](#))

## **5.5 Health**

Health professionals are in a strong position to identify welfare needs or safeguarding concerns regarding individual children and vulnerable adults and, where appropriate, and where identified provide treatment and support. This includes understanding risk factors, communicating and sharing information effectively with Children and Families Division and Adult Social Care. Additionally, health practitioners liaise with other organisations and agencies, assess needs and capacity, and respond to those needs whilst contributing to multi-agency assessments and reviews.

A designated health professional lead role is to support other professionals to recognise the needs of children and adults. They have a critical role to play in safeguarding from possible abuse and neglect and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. They work closely with GPs, primary care practitioners, consultants, paediatricians, nurses, health visitors, midwives, school nurses and those working in maternity, mental health, emergency care settings for children, young people and vulnerable adults and highly specialised services and secondary and tertiary care.

- Manx Care (Health) should identify a dedicated named doctor, a designated doctor, Head of Safeguarding, a named nurse and a named midwife for safeguarding children. Named professionals have a key role in promoting good professional practice within their organisation and agency, providing advice and expertise for fellow professionals, and ensuring safeguarding training is in place. They should

work closely with their organisation's/agency's safeguarding lead, on the executive board, designated health professionals for the health economy and other statutory safeguarding partners;

- Other public, voluntary and independent sector organisations, agencies and social enterprises providing health services to children and vulnerable adults should ensure that they follow this guidance.

## **5.6 Isle of Man Constabulary**

All police officers are well placed to identify when a child's or vulnerable adult's welfare is at risk and when they may need protection from harm. They have the right to full protection offered by the criminal law.

A core policing role is identifying and managing perpetrators who choose to target adults who are vulnerable. The police work together with all agencies and are committed to ensuring that vulnerable adults are protected from abuse or neglect and will take immediate action where necessary to keep vulnerable adults safe from harm, particularly when an allegation about abuse or neglect has been made. The police will be part of the investigation to find out what, if anything has happened. They will discuss with adults at risk the best way forward and where necessary refer to external agencies such as victim support.

In addition to identifying when a child may be a victim of a crime, police officers should be aware of the effect of other incidents which might pose safeguarding risks to children and where officers should pay particular attention. For example, an officer attending a domestic abuse incident should be aware of the effect of such behaviour on any children in the household.

Children who are encountered as offenders, or alleged offenders, are entitled to the same safeguards and protection as any other child and due regard should be given to their welfare at all times. For example, children who are apprehended in possession of Class A drugs may be victims of exploitation through drug dealing.

The police will hold important information about children who may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, as well as those who cause such harm. They should always share this information with other organisations where this is necessary to protect children. Similarly, they can expect other organisations to share information to enable the police to carry out their duties.

The police have the power to remove a child to suitable accommodation under Section 45 (1) of the Children and Young Person's Act 2001, if they have reasonable cause to believe that the child would otherwise be likely to suffer significant harm. Statutory powers to enter premises can be used with this section 45 power, and in circumstances to ensure the child's immediate protection.

Police emergency powers can help in urgent situations but should be used only when necessary. Wherever possible, the decision to remove a child from a parent or carer should be made by a court.

## **5.7 Probation Service**

The Family Court Welfare Service is incorporated into the Prison & Probation Service (The Department of Home Affairs) and was set up to safeguard and promote the welfare of

children involved in family court proceedings. It achieves this by providing Independent Social Work advice to the Courts.

The Prison and Probation Service within the Department of Home Affairs are primarily responsible for working with adult offenders both in the community and in the transition from custody to community to reduce reoffending and improve rehabilitation.

During the course of their duties, probation staff come into contact with offenders who:

- Have offended against a child;
- Pose a risk of harm to children even though they have not been convicted of an offence against a child;
- Are parents and/or carers of children;
- Have regular contact with a child for whom they do not have caring responsibility.

They are, therefore, well placed to identify offenders who pose a risk of harm to children as well as children who may be at heightened risk of involvement in (or exposure to) criminal or anti-social behaviour and of other poor outcomes due to the offending behaviour of their parent/carer(s).

The probation officer should ask an offender at the earliest opportunity whether they live with, have caring responsibilities for, are in regular contact with, or are seeking contact with children. Where this applies, a check should be made with the Children and Families Division at the earliest opportunity on whether the child/children is/are known to them and, if they are, the nature of their involvement.

Where an adult offender is assessed as presenting a risk of serious harm to children, the probation officer should develop a risk management plan and supervision plan that contains a specific objective to manage and reduce the risk of harm to children. The risk management plan should be shared with other organisations and agencies involved.

In preparing a sentence plan, the probation officer should consider how planned interventions might bear on parental responsibilities and whether the planned interventions could contribute to improved outcomes for children known to be in an existing relationship with the offender. To manage these risks a Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) meeting may be instigated by any agency to inform other agencies of such risks.

Many agencies are members of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), including the police, prison and probation services. MAPPA should work together with duty to share information and to co-operate with agencies to manage the risks posed by violent and sexual offenders living in the community in order to protect the public and should work closely with the safeguarding partners over services to commission locally.

## **5.8 Prison Service**

The Prison Service are responsible for identifying prisoners who are potential or confirmed 'persons posing a risk to children' (PPRC) and through assessment they should establish whether the PPRC presents a continuing risk to children whilst in prison custody (see the **Isle of Man Custody Act 1995**).



Where an individual has been identified as presenting a risk of harm to children the Probation Officer should inform the Children and Families Division of the offender's reception to prison, subsequent transfers, release on temporary licence (ROTL) and of the release address of the offender. The police should also be notified of the release date and address.

A prisoner's contact with children may be restricted. Decisions on the level of contact, if any, should be based on a multi-agency risk assessment. The assessment undertaken by the prison service should draw on relevant risk information held by police, probation officer and prison service. The Children and Families Division should contribute to the multi-agency risk assessment which will be paramount in the decision-making process.

The prison is able to monitor an individual's communication (including letters and telephone calls) to protect children where proportionate and necessary to the risk presented. [See Prison Visits by Children Procedure](#)

### **Isle of Man Registration and Inspection Team**

As set out in Safeguarding Together 2019 and the Isle of Man Regulation of Care Act 2013 the Registration and Inspection team have a duty to register, monitor, inspect and regulate Children's and Adult Care Homes and other facilities that provide care and support to children and vulnerable adults to ensure they provide people with safe, effective, high quality care and should:

- Intervene and take regulatory action on breaches of standards;
- Publish findings for all regulated services.

The registered person has specific responsibilities to prepare and implement policies setting out:

- Arrangements for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults from abuse or neglect;
- Procedures for referring child protection and adult safeguarding concerns should be available to all staff;
- Each facility should work with their local safeguarding partners to agree how they will work together to make sure that the needs of the individual are met.

### **5.10 Schools, Colleges and other Educational Providers**

The Department of Education, Sport and Culture (DESC) has a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children pursuant to section 17 of the Safeguarding Act 2018.

In addition, schools and colleges that provide accommodation for pupils under 18 must have regard to the "welfare duty" to safeguard and promote the child's welfare under section 48 of the Education Act 2001.

The Education Act 2001 promotes the duty of schools to promote the welfare of children. Education professionals are in a strong position to identify welfare needs or safeguarding concerns regarding individual children and, where appropriate, provide support. This includes understanding risk factors, communicating and sharing information effectively with

children and families, liaising with other organisations and agencies, assessing needs and capacity, responding to those needs and contributing to multi-agency assessments and reviews.

A designated Child Protection & Safeguarding Officer lead role is to support other professionals to recognise the needs of children. They have a critical role to play in safeguarding children from possible abuse and neglect and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. They work closely with designated safeguarding leads in schools and educational services.

All educational establishments including provided and maintained schools, independent schools, colleges, the Pre-School Assessment Centre and the Education Support Centre are required to have and implement a policy and procedures to safeguard children.

DESC staff have a responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom they are responsible, or with whom they come into contact and to adhere to, and ensure compliance with, the Safeguarding Board Child Protection procedures and the school/service's Child Protection Policy at all times. If, in the course of carrying out the duties of the post, the post holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children School/Service, they must report any concerns to the designated Safeguarding lead in their area or to the department's Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer.

### **5.11 Early Years and Childcare**

Early years providers have a duty to comply with the welfare requirements of all children

Early years providers must ensure that:

- They are alert to any issues of concern in the child's life;
- They have implemented policies and procedures to safeguard children. This must include an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child and in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.
- Staff complete safeguarding training that enables them to understand their safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect;
- They have a practitioner who is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within each early years setting and who must liaise with local statutory children's services as appropriate. This lead must also complete child protection training.

This includes:

- During term time, or when the setting is in operation, the designated safeguarding lead or an appropriately trained deputy should be available during opening hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns.

### **5.12 The Voluntary and Private Sectors**

All practitioners working in these organisations and agencies who are working with children and vulnerable adults are subject to the same safeguarding responsibilities and duties, whether paid or a volunteer.

Every charitable organisation, faith-based organisation and private sector organisation or agency should have policies in place to safeguard and protect children and vulnerable adults from harm. These should be followed and systems should be in place to ensure compliance in this. Individual practitioners, whether paid or volunteer, should be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm, how they should respond to safeguarding concerns and how to make a referral to Children and Families Division or Adult Social Care or the police if necessary. They should be aware of how they need to work with safeguarding partners.

### **5.13 Sports Clubs / Organisations**

There are many sports clubs and organisations including voluntary and private sector providers that deliver a wide range of sporting activities to children and vulnerable adults. Some of these will be community amateur sports clubs, some will be charities. All should have the arrangements described in this chapter in place and should collaborate to work effectively with the safeguarding partners as required by the safeguarding Board. Paid and volunteer staff need to be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, how they should respond to safeguarding concerns and how to make a referral to Children and Families Division, Adult Social Care or the police if necessary.

## **6. Organisations without Statutory Duties**

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All organisations, which do not have statutory duties but which have involvement with children and young people, directly or indirectly, should have in place the arrangements described within this document. They should be aware of how they need to work with safeguarding partners. They have a responsibility to ensure that their employees, volunteers and service users are aware of all the Safeguarding Board's procedures and guidelines and know how to access them.

Everybody who works with children, vulnerable adults, parents and other adults in connection with children should be able to recognise indicators of concern about a child or vulnerable adult's welfare or safety. A staff member or volunteer who may encounter safeguarding concerns should know:

- How to respond;
- Who in their organisation can offer support and guidance;
- When and how to make a referral to Children and Families Division/Adult Social Care or the police if necessary;
- What other services are available locally and how to gain access to them;
- How to access and receive appropriate training.