MS-CAS Adult Safeguarding Policy & Procedure

Introduction

MS-CAS is committed to ensuring that all trustees, employees, volunteers, members and service users are safeguarded in line with the provisions of the Care Act 2014 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Adult Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

It must be recognised that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances. People have complex lives and being safe is only one of the things they want for themselves.

Scope of the Policy and Procedure

The aim of this policy and procedure is to ensure:

the safety of adults at risk by outlining clear procedures

that all staff, trustees and volunteers within MS-CAS are clear about their responsibilities and are trained adequately

service plans consider the need to safeguard adults at risk

Definition of Adult at risk

An 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 needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it

This may include a person who:

is an older person who is frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment

has a learning disability

has a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment /or communication difficulty i.e. autism

has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder

has a long-term illness/condition

misuses substances or alcohol

lacks capacity to make specific decisions

Within the services provided by MS-CAS, adults at risk could be present in any group or session, so this safeguarding policy statement is applicable throughout all MS-CAS activities and provision. In the case of suspected abuse, initially staff, trustees or volunteers should raise an alert and submit this to the named Safeguarding lead Norma Roberts who will contact the Cheshire East Adult Social Care see below, and other authorities as applicable.

What is abuse?

Abuse of an adult can take many forms. Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take a variety of forms and can be both overt and covert. The following list is not exhaustive but is illustrative of the kinds of abuse that might be experienced.

Physical (including Female Genital Mutilation and Honour Based Violence)

Domestic Abuse

Psychological

Sexual abuse

Financial or material abuse

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

Neglect & Acts of Omission

Discrimination abuse

Organisational abuse

Self-Neglect

Deprivation Of Liberty

Standards

***MS-CAS* is required to:**

Where appropriate and required by regulations, carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check when staff/volunteers commence employment/volunteering. Where this has not been undertaken, staff and volunteers will not be allowed to work with adults unless supervised by a member of staff who has had a clear DBS check.

Demonstrate respect for all service users as individuals in all matters.

Provide relevant training in safeguarding matters for all staff and volunteers.

Ensure that all service users experience a suitable and supportive environment to encourage service user disclosure of any issues which might affect the way in which they should be treated.

Ensure all service users are aware of its Equality and Diversity policy and that they know how to complain if they become victims of harassment bullying, unfair treatment, or harassment.

Ensure a diverse range of services and training that is sensitive to difference.

Invite and encourage constructive feedback from service users about standards and styles of behaviour and promote an open and honest culture of respect for diversity.

Deal with complaints of abuse, unfair treatment or harassment and bullying promptly, sensitively, confidentially and in accordance with procedures

Ensure that all persons working for or providing services to *MS-CAS* are provided with a briefing on these safeguarding policies and procedures before any work is undertaken or any services delivered.

Report any incidents immediately to any relevant partners or commissioners.

(b) Service users are encouraged to:

Help prevent inappropriate behaviour by challenging and reporting behaviour that appears to be causing distress to others.

Support an open, constructive environment within which diversity is valued positively.

(c) Dealing with claims of abuse perpetrated by internal members of staff

This Policy makes it clear how staff and volunteers are expected to perform when dealing with all service users including adults at risk. It specifically ensures that claims made of abuse by internal staff will be investigated and dealt with.

(d) **Safeguarding lead**

The named Safeguarding Lead for MS-CAS is Norma Roberts, appointed at the trustee meeting on 17 June 2026. Contact can be made via enquiry@ms-cas.co.uk; safeguarding concerns must be passed to Norma promptly. If Norma is unavailable or

an allegation concerns her, contact another trustee who is not implicated. Do not delay a referral to Adult Social Care or the police while waiting for an internal response.

The named person will have full awareness of the policy and procedures guidelines and have attended training on safeguarding endorsed by the local Safeguarding Board.

The named contact will be a single point of contact for the organisation in relation to:

Child Sexual Exploitation

Female genital Mutilation

Prevent

Domestic Abuse

Honour Based Violence

Forced Marriage

Mental Capacity Act

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

Trafficking / Modern Slavery

Safeguarding Procedure

<u>First steps</u>

If you think abuse has or may have occurred, act immediately. It is the responsibility of the person first becoming aware of a situation where there may be an adult subject to, or at risk of, abuse to make safe and deal with the immediate needs of the person. This may mean taking reasonable steps to ensure the adult is in no immediate danger and seeking medical treatment if required as a matter of urgency.

Do NOT discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator.

Do NOT disturb or destroy articles that could be used in evidence. Where an assault of some kind is suspected do not wash or bathe the person unless this is associated with first aid treatment necessary to prevent further harm.

Share concerns or disclosures only with the safeguarding lead, an appropriate alternative trustee, or relevant authorities on a need-to-know basis.

If the allegation is about a staff member or volunteer of any organisation, ensure that the allegation is properly managed. Tell your safeguarding lead or another trustee member if your safeguarding lead is unavailable or is implicated in the allegation.

Contact the police if it is thought a crime has just been committed. Telephone 101 or 999 in an emergency.

Record details of the allegation as soon as possible on an incident form that can be kept secure. Include :

the allegation or concerns, including the date and time of the incident

what the adult at risk said about the abuse and how it occurred or what has been reported to you

The appearance and behaviour of the victim

Any injuries observed

Whether any dependants are also at risk

If the allegation is against a member of staff, a volunteer or a service user of *MS-CAS,* MS-CAS will ensure that any allegations made against members, or a member of staff will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

The worker must ensure that that the vulnerable adult is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made

The named person for safeguarding should be informed immediately

In the case of an allegation involving the named person, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by an independent person. (Note: this could be a committee member, trustee or anyone within the organisation that is in a senior position within the organisation and believed to be independent of the allegations being made)

The named person should contact the local authority social services team for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice and/or in the event of an emergency situation arising, the police

The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The named person (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and/or social services

MS-CAS will take advice from the police and/or social services before undertaking an internal investigation, to avoid compromising their enquiries. Consideration will be given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident

MS-CAS will also inform the Charity Commission and report this as a serious incident even if this is an allegation or suspicion as soon as is reasonably possible. This report

will outline how the trustees will investigate this and actions taken to prevent this from reoccurring

Whistle blowing will not prejudice the position or prospects of MS-CAS staff or volunteers

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead to decide without delay on the most appropriate course of action once the allegation or suspicion of abuse has been raised.

Deal with any immediate needs:

Ensure that the victim of the alleged abuse is safe

Ensure that any necessary emergency medical treatment is arranged

Ensure that no forensic evidence is lost

If the alleged perpetrator is also an adult at risk, ensure that another member of staff/manager is allocated to attend to their needs and ensure that other service users are not put at risk.

Clarify the facts stated by the member of staff. Do not investigate or question the alleged perpetrator. Listen to the adult, establish their wishes and immediate safety needs, and avoid leading questions or repeated questioning.

Check that the circumstances fall within the safeguarding adults' procedure i.e. meeting the definition of abuse as defined in this Policy and Procedure.

Address issues of consent and confidentiality, taking care to not promise confidentiality.

Refer

A formal referral must be made on the same day as the alert is raised when:

a crime has been, could have been, or yet could be committed.

There is a suspicion that an abuse has taken place.

The allegation involves a child

The alleged perpetrator is themselves an adult at risk.

They are unsure if abuse has taken place

Where a decision is made NOT to refer, the alert must be recorded, with the reasons for the decision not to refer.

All incidents, allegations of abuse and complaints must be recorded , monitored and available for internal and external audit.

The referral stage involves bringing the concern regarding alleged abuse or potential abuse formally to the attention of the following authorities as appropriate:

All referrals should be made to**: Cheshire East Adult Social Care, Tel: 0300 123 5010**

The police if you think a crime may have been committed - **Tel: 101** and specify it is a safeguarding issue (999 in an emergency).

• If a child is also at risk, contact **Children's Services, Tel: 0300 123 5012**

• Outside normal office hours, or on weekends or Bank Holidays, contact should be made for children's and adults on the **out of hours** number **0300 123 5022**.

The person making the referral will fill in an organisation first account form, which asks for:

The name of the adult

Date of birth and age

Address and telephone number

Why the adult is considered to be at risk

Whether consent has been obtained for the referral, and if not the reasons e.g. the adult lacks mental capacity or there is an over-riding public interest (e.g. where other adults or children are at risk)

What the person involved has said they want to happen next. Seek their consent where possible. If information is shared without consent, record the lawful reason, such as risk to others, serious harm or crime, coercion, or lack of capacity requiring a best-interests decision. Explain the decision to the adult where safe to do so.

Whether there are any concerns or doubts about the mental capacity of the adult at risk

Whether the police are aware of the allegation, and whether a police investigation is underway

The safeguarding lead may be asked to fill in the Cheshire East Safeguarding referral form also or can use it in the first instance if *MS-CAS*'s first account form is not to hand

What happens next?

The designated lead should receive acknowledgement for the referral from the relevant agency and be given feedback about what happens next. This will not always be appropriate to pass on to the person completing the first account report.

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the following relevant policies:

Equality and Diversity

Bullying and Harassment

Complaints Policy

Data Protection Policy

Social Media Policy

POLICY DATED: [16/11/2022*]*

REVIEW DATE: Annually, or sooner following an incident or relevant change in guidance.

MS-CAS Adults Safeguarding Policy Reviewed 17th June 2026

Appendix 1 - Safeguarding Action Plan

Action	Responsible Person	Date to be completed by	Date completed	Evidence
Incidents, allegations and complaints are monitored and lessons learnt are fed into planning				
All staff and volunteers are trained on safeguarding [including who the lead is, how to act, Mental Capacity and Deprivation of Liberty] through induction training and mandatory refresher courses				
Service developments are informed by the views of adults and carers				
Staff and volunteers working with children and adults at MS-CAS receive regular support and supervision				

All staff / volunteers understand the practical implications of the safeguarding policy and procedure				
Safer Recruitment policy for both staff and volunteers is in place				

DATE OF LATEST REVIEW: 17th June 2026

NEXT REVIEW DATE: 17th June 2027