



# Safeguarding Adults Policy

**Version:** 1

**Date:** Dec 2025

**Review Date:** Dec 2026

**Safeguarding Lead:** Amber Sinclair

**Appendices:** Rock School Bus's Safeguarding Procedures can be found in Appendix A.

## 1. Policy Statement

1.1 This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students, or anyone working on behalf of Rock School Bus.

### 1.2 Purpose:

To protect adults at risk who access Rock School Bus's services, including adults at risk whose parents or carers use our services.

To provide staff and volunteers with clear principles guiding our approach to safeguarding and adult protection.

### 1.3 Commitment:

Rock School Bus believes that adults at risk should never experience abuse. We are committed to promoting their welfare and practising in a way that protects them.

### 1.4 We recognise that:

The welfare of adults at risk is paramount (Care Act 2014).

All adults at risk, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity, have a right to protection from harm or abuse.

Some adults at risk may be particularly vulnerable due to previous experiences, dependency, communication needs, or other factors.

Working in partnership with adults at risk, their families, carers, and other agencies is essential to safeguarding.

### 1.5 We will keep adults at risk safe by:

Valuing, listening to, and respecting them.

Appointing a **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)**, a deputy, and a lead board member for safeguarding.

Implementing safeguarding procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.

Providing supervision, support, training, and quality assurance for staff and volunteers.

Recruiting safely, including appropriate checks and references.

Recording and securely storing safeguarding information in line with data protection requirements.

Sharing concerns and relevant information with appropriate agencies while involving adults at risk and carers as appropriate.

Managing allegations against staff or volunteers in line with procedures.

Maintaining anti-bullying measures and appropriate procedures to address bullying.

Ensuring effective complaints and whistleblowing procedures.

Providing a safe physical environment for adults at risk, staff, and volunteers, in line with health and safety legislation.

## 2. Introduction

2.1 Rock School Bus provides services to a wide range of people, some of whom are vulnerable adults.

2.2 This policy is based on:

### **Care Act 2014**

Department of Health guidance on protecting vulnerable adults (2000)

2.3 Staff and volunteers have a duty to protect adults at risk from abuse or neglect.

2.4 Procedures in this policy assist staff in acting on suspected or reported abuse.

2.5 Specific services or projects may have supplementary procedures to meet funders' or partner requirements.

### 3. Adults at Risk

#### 3.1 Safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:

- Has needs for care and support (regardless of whether these needs are being met by the local authority).
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect related to those needs.
- Is unable to protect themselves from the risk or experience of abuse or neglect.

3.2 Adults 18+ still receiving children's services (e.g., young adults with complex needs in residential education) are safeguarded under adult safeguarding arrangements.

3.3 **Adult safeguarding** is about protecting adults' rights to live safely, free from abuse and neglect, while promoting their wellbeing and respecting their views, wishes, feelings, and beliefs.

#### 3.4 **Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC):**

- MARACs assess risks in domestic abuse cases, including victims, children, and perpetrators.
- They facilitate joint risk management plans, improve safety, reduce repeat victimisation, and support staff involved in high-risk cases.
- Responsibility for action remains with individual agencies; MARACs enable information sharing and coordinated response.

### 4. Definitions and Categories of Abuse

4.1 Abuse can take many forms. This list is illustrative, not exhaustive:

**Physical abuse:** Assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint, or physical sanctions.

**Domestic abuse:** Psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional, or "honour-based" violence.

**Sexual abuse:** Rape, sexual harassment, indecent exposure, sexual teasing, pornography, or sexual assault.

**Psychological/emotional abuse:** Threats, humiliation, controlling behaviour, verbal abuse, cyberbullying, isolation, or unjustified withdrawal of support.

**Financial/material abuse:** Theft, fraud, scams, coercion, misappropriation of property, or unexplained changes in financial arrangements.

**Modern slavery:** Slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude.

**Discriminatory abuse:** Harassment based on race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.

**Organisational abuse:** Neglect or poor practice in institutions, care settings, or home care, including omission of care or poor professional practice.

**Neglect/self-neglect:** Failure to meet personal hygiene, health, or safety needs, including hoarding. Self-neglect may require safeguarding action if the adult cannot protect themselves.

4.2 Abuse may be one-off or repeated, affecting one or multiple adults. Identifying patterns of harm is crucial.

**Patterns of abuse:**

Serial abuse: Grooming or repeated targeting of individuals.

Long-term abuse: Ongoing abuse within family or caregiving relationships.

Opportunistic abuse: Theft or exploitation of vulnerable adults.

**Domestic abuse:** Any incident or pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, or abuse between intimate partners or family members (16+), regardless of gender or sexuality.

**Financial abuse indicators:** Change in living conditions, unexplained withdrawals, inability to pay bills, sudden changes to wills or financial documents.

## 5. Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers

Staff and volunteers must be alert to signs that all is not well with an adult at risk.

They are **not responsible for diagnosing or investigating abuse**, but must report concerns promptly.

All concerns should be discussed with the Director.

The **Safeguarding Lead** is the Director of Rock School Bus

## 6. Disclosure of Abuse

6.1 If an adult at risk discloses abuse, staff must act **urgently** following organisational procedures.

Record all concerns in writing.

Clearly document agreed actions and responsible parties.

Inform the individual that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where abuse risk exists.

Discuss actions with the project coordinator and Director before reporting.

If an adult refuses to disclose, it may be necessary to report without consent; inform them in advance.

Written records should include sketches, injury descriptions, and exact language used by the adult.

## 7. Suspicion of Abuse

Suspicions must be discussed immediately with a line manager.

Emergency action to protect the adult should never be delayed.

Actions taken should be recorded in writing, including conversations, observations, and agreed next steps.

Cultural and lifestyle considerations should be acknowledged but never prevent safeguarding action.

## 8. Support to Staff and Volunteers

Staff and volunteers will be supported throughout investigations.

The Director liaises with Adult Services regarding staff involvement and support needs.

## 9. Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

Allegations will be taken seriously, and staff will receive support.

Adult Services may investigate, and disciplinary procedures may be implemented.

## 10. Confidentiality

All safeguarding matters are confidential.

Staff should refer to the organisation's **Confidentiality Policy**.

## 11. Preventing Abuse by Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers undergo safe recruitment, including references and DBS checks.

Criminal records do not automatically prevent employment; suitability is assessed individually.

Safety and protection of adults at risk take precedence over reporting concerns about colleagues.

## 12. Document Retention

All safeguarding records must be securely stored for **10 years**.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

This policy is scheduled for review in Dec 2026.