

Home-Start Cotswolds is committed to keeping all adults safe from harm.

We believe everyone has the right to be treated with respect and to live free from abuse or neglect, no matter their age, background, or ability. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and we aim to create a culture where people feel safe, listened to, and able to speak up. The full Safeguarding Adult's Policy is quite detailed and may feel overwhelming as it contains information to ensure that your Home-Start follows procedure and legislation. This quick guide helps volunteers to be confident in recognising concerns, respond appropriately, and work together to protect adults from harm.

What is Adult Safeguarding?

Safeguarding means protecting someone's right to live in safety, free from abuse or neglect. Some adults may need extra support to stay safe. These people are called **"adults at risk"**.

Who is an Adult at Risk?

An adult at risk is someone aged:

- **18 or over (or 16+ in Scotland), and**
- **Needs care or support** (this could be due to illness, disability, mental health, or substance use), **and**
- **Is at risk of abuse or neglect,** and
- **Is unable to protect themselves because of their support needs.**

This might include someone who:

- Is frail or older
- Has a learning disability, mental health condition, dementia, or physical disability
- Has a serious illness
- Uses drugs or alcohol
- Is experiencing domestic abuse, homelessness, or exploitation
- Is seeking asylum or affected by modern slavery or forced marriage.

What is Abuse?

Abuse is when someone hurts another person or treats them badly. Abuse can happen anywhere—at home, in public, in care settings or online. A more detailed list can be found near the end of the full Safeguarding Adult's Policy (appendix 3).

Types of abuse include:

- **Physical** – hitting, shaking, rough handling
- **Sexual** – unwanted touching or sexual acts
- **Emotional/Psychological** – threats, bullying, name-calling
- **Neglect** – not getting the care, medication or support needed
- **Financial** – stealing money, pressuring someone to hand over possessions.

Your Role as a Volunteer

As a volunteer you **have a responsibility** to:

- **Recognise** when something doesn't feel right
- **Respond** calmly and appropriately

- **Refer** the concern to your **Coordinator**
- **Record** what happened as clearly as you can (your Coordinator can help you).

This is known as the **4Rs: Recognise – Respond – Refer – Record**

All information related to a concern of harm or abuse must be recorded as per the local Home-Start procedure for your role. For Home-Start this is done through use of a 'ROCA' (Record of Concerns and Action) or equivalent. A copy of the record may be required at a later date by another agency.

How Might You Recognise a Concern?

You might notice:

- Someone tells you they are being hurt or mistreated
- You see signs like bruises, poor hygiene, fear or withdrawal
- A person seems very anxious, especially around someone else
- You notice patterns, like missed appointments or odd behaviour
- A child shares something about what's happening to an adult.

What Should You Do?

Do:

- ✓ Stay calm
- ✓ Listen and show you care
- ✓ Take what they say seriously
- ✓ Reassure them they've done the right thing telling you
- ✓ Let them know you will speak to your **Coordinator**
- ✓ Tell your coordinator or another member of your Home-Start staff as soon as possible
- ✓ Write down what was said or seen – using the person's own words if possible.

Don't:

- ✗ Promise to keep it secret
- ✗ Ask leading questions (like "Did your partner do that?")
- ✗ Try to investigate or confront the person involved
- ✗ Share the information with anyone other than your Coordinator/Home-Start Staff Member

Important to Remember

- You're **not alone** – your Coordinator and Safeguarding Lead are there to support you.
- If **someone is in immediate danger**, call **999**, then let your Coordinator know.
- You **do not need the adult's permission** to share your concern with Home-Start. We may still need to act to protect children or others.
- It's OK to feel unsure – if it feels worrying or wrong, **say something**.
- Abuse can be very hidden. You may be the **only person** who notices and speaks up.

Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

If you hear or suspect any staff member, volunteer (including a trustee) is acting inappropriately, report this immediately to the Safeguarding Lead or your Coordinator. If necessary, you can contact your local social care advice team (see contacts below).

If an allegation of causing harm or inappropriate behaviour is made against you or someone very close to you, share this with your coordinator who will help you to understand the next steps.

Training and Support

You will receive safeguarding training as part of your volunteer role. Always ask for further guidance if you are unsure about any situation.

Key Contacts

Speak to your Home-Start Coordinator or Safeguarding Lead if you have any questions or concerns. If you are concerned that appropriate action has not been taken, please speak to your Coordinator again or, speak to another member of Home-Start staff or trustee. If you are still worried about an adult, you can visit the [Ann Craft Trust](#) website to find sources of support. If you are concerned about the safety and/or welfare of a child, please speak to your coordinator and follow the guidance in the Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy found on our website [Policies & Documents | Home Start Cotswolds](#)

Local Procedures

The Home-Start Cotswolds office number is 01285 885 391. Other relevant contact names and numbers:

Name	Telephone Number	Position
Katharine Campbell	07775 756848	Safeguarding Lead
Liz Wilkinson	07881 791739	Designated Safeguarding Officer
Clare Baker	07870 851353	Designated Safeguarding Officer
Hannah Morrison	07824 610957	Designated Safeguarding Officer
Claire Holmes	01285 885 391	Safeguarding Trustee

Your Home-Start team is responsible for contacting your local authority social care to inform them of safeguarding concerns. You would only need to contact this team yourself if you felt that Home-Start had not taken appropriate action in response to a safeguarding concern or for out-of-hours urgent concerns:

Adults Help Desk If you are worried or concerned about a vulnerable adult who you think is being abused or neglected contact (01452) 426868 (9am-5pm) or 999 (out of hours).

Need Support?

If you're upset or worried after raising a concern, talk to your Coordinator. Safeguarding can be emotional, and Home-Start is here to support you too.