



How does Mencap keep people safe?

Keeping people safe as we support them to enjoy happy and healthy lives is a responsibility that we take seriously. We want you to feel you can entrust the safety of your family member or friend to those who support them. Our safeguarding policy and practice support us to ensure that you can do so with confidence.

What is abuse?

Abuse means illegal, improper or harmful practice. The forms it takes can include:

- physical abuse
- psychological or emotional abuse
- financial or material abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect or acts of omission.

Abuse or neglect may be deliberate or the result of negligence or ignorance and can be carried out by anyone.

Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Mencap's safeguarding responsibilities

Mencap works together with people, their families, friends and other organisations to prevent the risk and experience of abuse or neglect, whilst at the same time promoting people's wellbeing.

To do this:

- All colleagues throughout the organisation are required to be aware of safeguarding and their responsibilities to protect, prevent and support people where a safeguarding matter arises.
- We have policies and procedures in place, which help us to protect vulnerable adults and children from harm and abuse, and enable our colleagues and volunteers to know what to do if they have concerns.
- There are a range of legal and regulatory requirements around our safeguarding responsibilities. We are committed to acting promptly, responsibly and sensitively when safeguarding issues arise, working with relevant organisations and families

throughout the process.

- Our national safeguarding panel is made up of people from across the organisation and has an independent chairperson. This panel oversees our responsibilities and reports into our board of trustees.

Here at Mencap, safeguarding is not just about systems and processes, we engage with individuals throughout to ensure that people's voices are heard, that they are kept informed and are involved in solutions and outcomes.

Local authority safeguarding responsibilities

We work closely with local authorities to ensure we meet our safeguarding requirements.

Under the Care Act 2014, local authorities have a number of safeguarding responsibilities of their own including:

- leading a range of organisations that work together to prevent abuse and neglect
- establishing safeguarding adults boards made up of representatives from different agencies to implement the local safeguarding strategy
- making enquiries when they think someone may be at risk and action plan to ensure their safety
- carrying out Safeguarding Adults Reviews when someone dies as a result of neglect or abuse
- arranging advocacy for individuals who are subject to safeguarding reviews where necessary.

For more information about the Care Act, please visit: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

Reporting allegations of abuse

If you are concerned that a vulnerable person has been, or is being abused, or is at risk of harm, you should always tell someone. Share your concerns immediately with the service manager, or area operations manager if Mencap supports the person you are concerned about.

We will:

- take your concerns seriously



- investigate thoroughly
- keep you involved and informed of progress
- report the outcome to you and act appropriately where action needs to be taken
- make appropriate referrals and notifications to local authorities and other agencies as and when these are required.

Mencap is committed to creating an environment in which everyone feels welcome and safe. We have a safeguarding culture that focuses on the outcomes that a person we support wants to see, and we will include them throughout the process.

Duty of candour

As a social care organisation, Mencap is required to be open and transparent with the people we support, families, and other relevant people, about the care and support that they receive. This is called our Duty of Candour.

The duty of candour legally applies to services that are regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), but we are committed to ensuring that we maintain this duty across all of our services regardless of type or location.

For more information about this duty, you can ask the managers that oversee the service, or visit:

<http://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/regulations-enforcement/regulation-20-duty-candour>