

Date implemented:	October 2025
Date of next review:	October 2026
Assigned staff lead:	Ryan Harman, Head of Advice and Information

1. Safeguarding Adults Policy Statement

Prison Reform Trust (PRT) is committed to safeguarding adults at risk of harm and promoting their rights to safety, dignity, and respect. This policy sets out our commitment to preventing abuse, responding effectively to safeguarding concerns, and supporting those who may be affected.

We recognise our duty to act promptly and appropriately in response to any allegations, disclosures, or suspicions of abuse involving individuals we are in contact with, including service users, beneficiaries, research and programme participants, staff, and volunteers.

It is essential that all staff, trustees, volunteers, associates, students, and anyone working on behalf of PRT are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. PRT is committed to embedding safeguarding throughout its work and culture.

Our Safeguarding Adults Policy and accompanying procedures are designed to:

- Promote good working practices that can prevent harm, abuse and coercion occurring
- Respond swiftly and appropriately to safeguarding concerns.
- Provide support to individuals who may be experiencing or at risk of abuse.

Our Commitment in Practice

PRT will:

- Promote the freedom and dignity of people affected by abuse.
- Promote the right of every person to live free from abuse, neglect, and coercion.
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of individuals who may not have the capacity to make decisions about their own safety.
- Manage our services and programmes in ways that promote safety and reduce the risk of abuse.
- Recruit staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all appropriate checks are completed.
- Provide supervision, support, and safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers.

Implementation and Responsibility

PRT will:

- Ensure all trustees, senior managers, staff, and volunteers are familiar with this policy and associated procedures.
- Respect confidentiality, seeking consent to share information wherever possible.
- Inform service users that in situations where a person is at serious risk, a child is in danger, or a crime has been committed, information may be shared with external agencies without consent.
- Keep informed of national safeguarding developments and legal duties.
- Ensure that our Designated Named Person for Safeguarding Adults understands their responsibilities to refer concerns to the appropriate statutory agencies (e.g. Prison Services, Police, Adult Social Services) when necessary.

The Designated Named Person for Safeguarding Adults in PRT is Ryan Harman, Head of Advice and Information.

The Care Act 2014

The Care Act statutory guidance defines adult safeguarding as:

‘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.’

Safeguarding duties apply to an adult 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 care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

(Care Act 2014, section 42)

Six principles of Adult Safeguarding

The Care Act sets out the following principles that should underpin the safeguarding of adults.

Empowerment

People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

“I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and this directly inform what happens.”

Prevention

It is better to take action before harm occurs.

“I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is. I know how to recognise the signs, and I know what I can do to seek help.”

Proportionality

The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

“I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest and they will only get involved as much as is necessary.”

Protection

Support and representation for those in greatest need.

“I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want.”

Partnership

Services offer local solutions through working closely with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

“I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me.”

Accountability

Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

“I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they.”

2. Our services and safeguarding context

Our safeguarding procedures have been designed to ensure the welfare and protection of any adult who accesses services provided by PRT or is in contact with PRT. We recognise that adult abuse can be a difficult subject for staff to deal with. PRT is committed to the belief that the protection of adults at risk of harm from harm and abuse is everybody’s responsibility and the aim of these procedures is to ensure that all managers, trustees of the organisation, SMT members, staff and volunteers act appropriately in response to any concern around adult abuse.

The PRT services/projects which are most likely to encounter safeguarding concerns are:

- Our advice and information service for people in prison, their friends and families. The service is delivered via written correspondence, phone and email contact.
- Building Futures programme who engage with people in prison on long sentences. This contact takes place through visits to prison, groups and by written and telephone contact.
- Research projects which can include visits to prisons, group sessions, individual interviews and written contact.
- Through calls to the Policy and Communications Media duty line
- Through general email and voicemail contact to PRT

The vast majority of safeguarding issues PRT responds to relate to people in custody. We acknowledge that when someone is in custody the responsibilities for safeguarding are held by the relevant prison rather than the local authority and so our policy and procedures reflect this.

We note that due to differences in responsibility and the circumstances of people in prison, we respond to concerns about self-harm and suicide within our safeguarding procedures despite not being one of the categories of abuse listed in the Care Act (section 4, below).

N.B. Staff should refer to our detailed safeguarding procedures which include more detail about responding to concerns about someone in prison and safeguarding concerns which arise from prison visits.

3. Preventing abuse

PRT is committed to putting in place safeguards and measures to reduce the likelihood of abuse taking place within the services it offers and that all those involved within PRT will be treated with respect.

Therefore this policy needs to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Equal Rights and Diversity
- Volunteers
- Complaints
- Whistle Blowing
- Staff Management
- Data Protection
- Safer Recruitment
- Relationships at Work

PRT is committed to safer recruitment policies and practices for paid staff, trustees and volunteers. This includes DBS checks (Disclosure and Disbarring Service) and staff risk assessment for certain roles, please see the Safer Recruitment Policy for details.

The organisation will work within the current legal framework to act on any reports, disclosures, or suspicions of abuse relating to staff or volunteers.

Our Complaints policy and Safeguarding Adults policy will be available to service users through our website and on request.

4. Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse

PRT is committed to ensuring that all staff, the SMT, trustees and volunteers undertake training to gain a basic awareness of signs and symptoms of abuse. PRT will ensure that the Designated Named Person and other members of staff, trustees and volunteers have access to training around Safeguarding Adults.

Safeguarding training will be a) delivered internally as part of induction, b) through regular refreshers offered internally and c) at least every 3 years delivered by an external organisation.

“Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons” (No Secrets: Department of Health, 2000)

The Care Act recognises 10 categories of abuse that may be experienced by adults:

- **Self-neglect** - this covers a wide range of behaviour, but it can be broadly defined as neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health, or surroundings. An example of self-neglect is behaviour such as hoarding.
- **Modern Slavery** - this encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude.

- **Domestic Abuse** - this includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse perpetrated by anyone within a person's family. It also includes so-called "honour" based violence.
- **Discriminatory** - abuse that centres on a difference or perceived difference, particularly with respect to race, gender, disability, or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act.
- **Organisational** - this includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. Organisational abuse can range from one off incidents to ongoing ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- **Physical** - includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, restraint, and misuse of medication. It can also include inappropriate sanctions.
- **Sexual** - includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented, or was pressured into consenting.
- **Financial or Material** - includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, and coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions. It can also include the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.
- **Neglect and Acts of Omission** - includes ignoring medical or physical care needs and failing to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services. It also includes the withdrawing of the necessities of life, including medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.
- **Emotional or Psychological** - includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly. Abuse may be a single act or repeated acts.

People who behave abusively come from all backgrounds and walks of life. They may be prison officers, doctors, nurses, social workers, advocates, staff members, volunteers or others in a position of trust. They may also be relatives, friends, neighbours or people who use the same services as the person experiencing abuse.

5. Designated Named Person for safeguarding adults

PRT has an appointed individual who is responsible for dealing with any Safeguarding Adults concerns. The Designated Named Person(s) for Safeguarding Adults within PRT is/are:

Designated Named Person for Safeguarding Adults: Ryan Harman

Work Telephone number: 020 7251 5070

Email: ryan.harman@prisonreformtrust.org.uk

Should the Designated Named Person be unavailable then SMT members, trustees, staff or volunteers should notify the CEO, Pia Sinha. In the event that the safeguarding concern is a conflict of interest in relation to the Designated Named Person, the CEO should also be the alternative point of contact.

The roles and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:

- to ensure that all staff including volunteers and trustees are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they have concerns that a vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or has experienced abuse or neglect
- to ensure that concerns are acted on, clearly recorded and referred to the prison or an Adult Social Care team or to the allocated probation officer/social worker/care manager where necessary
- to follow up any referrals and ensure the issues have been addressed
- consider any recommendations from the Safeguarding Adults process
- to report regularly to the Senior Management Team, Director and Trustees
- to reinforce the utmost need for confidentiality and to ensure that staff and volunteers are adhering to good practice with regard to confidentiality and security. This is because it is around the time that a person starts to challenge abuse that the risks of increasing intensity of abuse are greatest
- to ensure that staff and volunteers working directly with service users who have experienced abuse, or who are experiencing abuse, are well supported and receive appropriate supervision
- if appropriate staff or volunteers will be given support and afforded protection if necessary under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998: they will be dealt with in a fair and equitable manner and they will be kept informed of any action that has been taken and its outcome

6. Responsibilities of other staff

PRT recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

All staff/volunteers should be aware of potential safeguarding issues relevant to their role and know which policy and practices to follow should those issues arise.

Project leads/managers are responsible for making sure that staff in their team are aware of and follow policy and procedures to identify, report and respond to safeguarding concerns in line with PRT policy. This includes being aware of safeguarding risk to staff and volunteers.

Senior Management team take part in regular safeguarding 'health check' as part of risk register at SMT

Board members - Safeguarding lead to report to regular GP subcommittee meetings and full board when required.

7. Responding to people who have experienced or are experiencing abuse

PRT recognises its duty to act on any reports, disclosures, or suspicions of abuse or neglect involving adults at risk. All safeguarding concerns will be taken seriously, and appropriate action will be taken in line with the organisation's safeguarding procedures and legal obligations.

All situations of abuse or alleged abuse will be communicated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If they are unavailable this should alternatively be communicated to the CEO, or in their absence, the Deputy Director.

If it is appropriate and there is consent from the individual, or there is a good reason to override consent, a referral (alert) will be made to the appropriate authority (i.e. the relevant prison or Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB)). This stage is called the safeguarding referral or alert. If the individual

experiencing abuse does not have capacity to consent a referral will be made without that person's consent, in their best interests. The Designated Safeguarding Lead may take advice at the above stage from the SAB and/or the prison/Police.

If a member of the SMT, a trustee, staff member or volunteer is unable to raise this concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead then concerns can be raised directly with the prison or SAB. The alleged victim will be told that this will happen.

Staff working frequently with vulnerable adults are trained to identify when safeguarding concerns meet the threshold for immediate referral to the relevant authority, usually the relevant prison. In these cases, referrals should be made as soon as possible and can be actioned without prior discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or alternative). Staff must still communicate the concerns and actions taken with the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as is practicable.

Information should be provided to the individual. This could be about other sources of help or information that could enable them to decide what to do about their experience, enable them to recover from their experience and enable them to seek justice.

Detailed procedures for reporting, recording, and responding to safeguarding concerns are outlined in the PRT Safeguarding Procedures document, which must be followed by all staff and volunteers

8. Managing allegations made against member of staff or volunteer

PRT will ensure that any allegations made against members or member of staff will be responded to as quickly as possible.

Where a member of staff/volunteer is thought to have committed a criminal offence the police will be informed. If a crime has been witnessed the police should be contacted immediately.

The safety of the individual(s) concerned is paramount. A risk assessment must be undertaken immediately to assess the level of risk to all service users posed by the alleged perpetrator. This will include whether it is safe for them to continue in their role or any other role within the service whilst the investigation is undertaken.

If appropriate the Designated Named Person will liaise with relevant Safeguarding Adult Board to discuss the best course of action and to ensure that the PRT's disciplinary procedures are coordinated with any other enquiries taking place as part of the ongoing management of the allegation.

PRT has a whistle blowing policy and staff are aware of this policy. Staff will be supported to use this policy. Please also refer to the Safer Recruitment Policy and the Staff Management Policy.

9. Recording and managing confidential information

PRT is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information around Safeguarding Adults issues should be shared only with those who need to know. For further information, please see PRT's Data Protection policy.

All allegations/concerns should be recorded by the Designated Named Person. The information should be factual and not based on opinions, record what the person tells you, what you have seen and witnesses if appropriate.

The information that is recorded will be kept secure, with restricted access where appropriate, and will comply with data protection.

A record form is also provided below for referrals to Safeguarding Adult Boards (Appendix 1). Please note many local authorities will have their own referral form.

10. Disseminating/Reviewing policy and procedures

This Safeguarding Adults Policy and associated procedures will be clearly communicated to staff, trustees, volunteers, service users, and other contacts. The Designated Named Person will be responsible for ensuring that this is done, following scrutiny and approval from the board of trustees, through the Staffing & General Purpose sub-committee.

The Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures will be reviewed by the Senior Management Team annually and every three years by the Staffing & General Purpose sub-committee. The Designated Named Person for Safeguarding Adults will be involved in this process and can recommend any changes. The Designated Named Person will also ensure that any changes are clearly communicated to staff, trustees and volunteers. It may be appropriate to involve service users in the review and service users and need to be informed of any significant changes.

October 2025

Due for Review by October 2028 (or sooner if there is a significant change to PRT operations or national legislation)