

## Safeguarding Service Users from Abuse Policy

---

### Policy Statement

The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to make sure that all of us at the organisation are fully committed to these principles and values. This policy applies to all Marcus & Marcus employees, service users and other stakeholders, and is designed to clearly outline the procedures and practices we need to apply in order to effectively safeguard our vulnerable adult service users at risk of harm from all types abuse and neglect.

We understand the definition of “vulnerable adult” or “adult at risk of harm” to be a person aged 18 years or over who is in need of care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

We are committed to the guidance of local safeguarding authorities, which is to empower and protect adults who are at risk of abuse and neglect, as defined by statutory guidance.

This policy is created in line with Care Quality Commission recommendations and guidance; The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014; The Care Act 2014; The Equality Act 2010 and The Mental Capacity Act 2005.

### Principles

Marcus & Marcus operates on the core principle that it is the right of all our vulnerable adult service users to be kept safe from all forms of abuse and harm at all times.

Vulnerable adults with care and support needs, such as learning disabilities, are more likely to be abused or neglected. They are viewed as an easy target and may be less likely to identify abuse themselves or to report it. People with communication difficulties are particularly at risk because they may not be able to alert others. Vulnerable adults may not even be aware they are being abused. This is especially likely if they have a cognitive impairment.

We believe that everyone involved in the care of vulnerable adults has a duty to protect them from taking unacceptable risks and to keep them safe from harm.

Signs of abuse can often be difficult to detect. This policy aims to assist all Marcus & Marcus employees and staff who work with our service users, many of whom have complex care and support needs, to identify early the signs of abuse and recognise the possible indicators. Most types of abuse against vulnerable adults are criminal offences and will be treated as such and the Police will be notified in these cases.

**Marcus & Marcus has a zero tolerance approach  
to those who abuse our service users**

## Identifying Abusers

Marcus & Marcus accepts that abuse can be committed by a wide range of people, and we accept our responsibility to protect all our vulnerable service users from possible abuse or harm from all sources, which include:

1. Care staff and management
2. Volunteers working within our service
3. Visiting health and social care practitioners and other official visitors
4. Service users' relatives, friends and neighbours
5. People who have contact with our service users while they are out in the community
6. Friends & followers on their social networks or living in the community at large.

## The Role and Accountability of Staff in Relation to Abuse

Marcus & Marcus insist that all employees have a responsibility to:

1. Provide service users with the best possible care and support
2. Desist from any abusive or harmful action in relation to our service users
3. Report anything they witness which is or might be abusive or harmful
4. Co-operate in every possible way in any investigation into alleged abuse

Marcus & Marcus requires managers to take responsibility for:

1. Developing the systems and structures to deliver the best possible care
2. Encouraging a culture and ethos that is hostile to any sort of abuse or harm
3. Producing and revising policies and procedures to help prevent abuse or harm
4. Operating personnel procedures including which identify, appropriately deal with and if necessary exclude from practice potential or actual abusers
5. Investigating any evidence of abuse or harm speedily and sympathetically
6. Implementing improvements to procedures if an investigation into abuse or harm reveals deficiencies in the way in which the service operates
7. Liaising and collaborating with all other protection agencies in combating abuse and harm to improve the safeguarding and protection of our vulnerable service users

## Recruitment Practices

Marcus & Marcus takes great care in the recruitment of staff and carries out all possible checks on new recruits to ensure that they are of the highest standard. We also co-operate in all initiatives regarding the sharing of information on care workers who are found to be unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults. Marcus & Marcus ensures that all employees working in a regulated activities are checked against Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) records and barred lists in line with current employment requirements.

## Types of Abuse

Marcus & Marcus adheres to the definitions of abuse that have been developed nationally, included in the Care Act 2014 and within Care Quality Commission guidance.

The types of abuse, examples and indicators are not an exhaustive list and vulnerable service users may be subjected to a number of these types of abuse at the same time.

### Physical Abuse

Examples: Assault, slapping, pinching, hair pulling, rough handling; inappropriate or unlawful use of restraint; involuntary isolation, misuse of medication and forcible feeding.

Indicators: Unexplained and frequent injuries; Bruising and marks; Subdued or changed behaviour in the presence of another and injuries inconsistent with a person's lifestyle.

### Domestic Violence

Domestic violence and abuse includes any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

Examples: Assault, threats, humiliation, intimidated, punishing, isolating the person from sources of support, exploiting resources or money and regulating everyday behaviour.

Indicators: Low self-esteem, physical evidence of violence, cuts and bruises, isolation from friends and family, fear of outside intervention and limited access to money.

## Sexual Abuse

Examples: Rape, attempted rape, sexual assault, inappropriate touching anywhere, indecent exposure, sexual photography or forced use of pornography, sexual teasing or harassment and any sexual activity that a person lacks the capacity to consent to.

Indicators: Bruising and marks to thighs, buttocks and arms and neck; Torn, stained or bloody underclothing; Bleeding, pain or itching in the genital area; Walking or sitting difficulties; Infections, genital discharge or sexually transmitted diseases; Pregnancy in a woman unable to consent to sex; Use of sexual language and changes in sexual attitude; Self-harming; Fear of personal care and a reluctance to be alone with a particular person.

## Psychological or emotional abuse

Examples: Enforced social isolation; Preventing access to social activities and friends; Removing mobility or communication aids; Leaving someone unattended when they need assistance; Preventing someone from meeting religious or cultural needs; Failure to respect privacy; Intimidation, coercion and verbal abuse; Bullying & Cyber bullying.

Indicators: An air of silence when a particular person is present; Withdrawal or a change in the mental state; Insomnia; Low self-esteem; Uncooperative behaviour; Signs of distress or anger; False claims by someone involved to attract unnecessary treatment.

## Financial or material abuse

Examples: Theft of money or possessions; Fraud and scamming; Preventing access to money, benefits or assets; Borrowing money from a service user; Misusing a service user's personal allowance and misusing bank accounts, credit cards and documents.

Indicators: Missing money or personal possessions; Unexplained lack of money; Unexplained withdrawals from bank account; Family members or others show unusual interest in a service user's assets; A lack of financial accounting and missing receipts.

## Modern slavery

Examples: Human trafficking; Forced labour; Domestic servitude; Sexual exploitation, such as escort work, prostitution and pornography and debt bondage.

Indicators: Signs of physical or emotional abuse; Appearing to be malnourished, unkempt or withdrawn; Isolation from the community; Seeming under the influence of others; Lack of personal effects or documents; Avoiding eye contact and a fear of Police and authority.

## Discriminatory abuse

Discriminatory abuse is unfair, inequitable and abusive treatment of a vulnerable adult service user based on their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation. These are known as 'Protected Characteristics' under the Care Act 2014. Examples: Verbal abuse; Denying access to communication aids, not allowing access to an interpreter, signer/lip-reader; Harassment or exclusion; Substandard service provision.

Indicators: The vulnerable service user appears to be withdrawn and isolated from others; Anger, frustration, fear or anxiety; Care and support provided does not take account of the person's individual needs in terms of their 'protected characteristic'.

## Organisational or institutional abuse

Examples: Discouraging the involvement of relatives or friends; Run-down or cramped establishments; Insufficient staff or high staff turnover; Abusive and disrespectful towards service users; Inappropriate use of restraints; No respect for dignity and privacy; Misuse of medication; Inadequate food and drink; Not accounting for religious or cultural needs

Indicators: Lack of choice for service users; Inadequate staffing levels; People being hungry or dehydrated; Poor standards of care and support; Lack of personal clothing and possessions; Lack of adequate procedures; Absence of visitors; Lack of social, recreational and educational activities and Public discussion of personal matters; An absence of individual care plans and a poor management and support structures.

## Neglect and acts of omission

Examples: Failure to provide access to food, shelter, clothing, heating, stimulation and activity, personal or medical care; Providing care in a way that the person dislikes; Failure to administer medication; Refusing access to visitors; Not taking account of individuals' cultural, religious or ethnic needs; Failure to ensure privacy and dignity.

Indicators: Poor living environment; Poor physical condition or personal hygiene; Pressure sores or ulcers; Malnutrition or unexplained weight loss; Untreated injuries and medical problems; Untaken medication and inappropriate or inadequate clothing.

## Self-neglect

Examples: Lack of self-care that threatens personal health and safety; Neglecting personal hygiene, health or surroundings; Inability to avoid self-harm; Failure to seek help or access health and social care services; Unwillingness to manage personal affairs.

Indicators: Poor personal hygiene; Unkempt appearance; Lack of essential food, clothing or shelter; Malnutrition or dehydration; Living in squalid or unsanitary conditions

Neglecting household maintenance; Hoarding; Non-compliance with health and care services; Inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury.

**If employees should see evidence of any of the indicators, a note should be made in the service users case notes / daily log, with a description, date and signature of the worker. This should be reported to the Manager or the 'On Call' Person ASAP!**

## Safeguarding Adults - Staff Reporting Procedure

If a Marcus & Marcus employee is witness to any type of abuse, they should intervene and challenge the behavior, but only if it is safe to do so, and they must always ensure the safety of the vulnerable service user at risk.

**All staff must follow the procedure below in case of disclosure, observation and suspicion of abuse:**

- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Assure them that you believe them
- That they will be taken seriously
- Explain to them that you have to tell someone
- That you cannot keep secrets
- Reassure them that they were right to tell
- That it wasn't their fault
- Where there is a possibility that forensic evidence may exist, protect the evidence – DO NOT CLEAN UP or allow them to do so
- Do not prompt them or ask for more details as this may contaminate evidence and hamper any criminal investigation and/or prosecution
- Ascertain the facts – who? what? where? when? how?
- Do not ask leading questions, use open questions like “anything else to tell me?” or “and”
- Make an accurate, immediate record of the allegations and/or what has been observed, as well as any action taken
- Record word for word what was said, try not to edit or change the words used
- Use a black or blue ink pen as the document may have to be copied, sign and date it also recording the location and anyone else who was present
- Pass the report to your manager immediately or within 4 hours

## Person in a Position of Trust (PiPoT)

If you have a PiPoT concern which relates to an employee, student or volunteer at Marcus & Marcus who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed an adult or child or,
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, an adult or child, or
- behaved towards an adult or child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to adults with care and support needs.

In such instances, the designated Safeguarding Lead should be notified immediately, and the necessary safeguarding protocols must be adhered to in accordance with The Care Act 2014.

If the allegation constitutes abuse, the manager must contact the relevant Local Authority Safeguarding Team and the Care Quality Commission to raise an alert **within 24 hours**.

All safeguarding alerts will need to be raised with the relevant Local Safeguarding Authority with the **CQC copied into the safeguarding alert** - [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk).

Failing to report an actual or suspected case of abuse is considered a serious matter. The company will consider this as gross misconduct which will be investigated and can lead to dismissal.

## Inter-agency Working

Marcus & Marcus recognise the complexities involved in the safeguarding of vulnerable service users from abuse and risk of harm and is aware of the benefits to be gained from good multi-disciplinary and inter-agency working. All employees are required to work actively together and with other agencies, such as Local Safeguarding Authorities, the Care Quality Commission and The Police, on the prevention, identification, investigation and treatment of alleged, suspected or confirmed abuse and the management of risk.

## Staff support

Marcus & Marcus ensure that all staff having contact with particularly vulnerable service users are adequately trained and appropriately experienced to provide the best possible care and support. Where a service user presents an area of vulnerability outside the experience of the staff allocated to their care, the staff will be given specific briefing or training. Staff are supervised by qualified and experienced senior staff and managers, and will have access when on duty, to the responsible person for advice and support.

Staff are expected to keep themselves updated with matters relating to Safeguarding. This is always supported in Team Meetings, Supervisions, Policy training and Memos.

All Marcus & Marcus employees are expected to regularly check staff Information on

our website ([www.marcusandmarcusinfosite.co.uk](http://www.marcusandmarcusinfosite.co.uk)) where additional information relating to Safeguarding is updated. In addition, all of our Policies and Procedures are found there also.

Unannounced Quality Assurance Spot checks (including during the night) will be carried out by management and senior staff, throughout the year, to ensure that our vulnerable Service Users are receiving the necessary support, in line with their assessed needs.

## Information

- How to Contact the CQC:
  - Tel. 03000 616161
  - Email: [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)
- Local Authority Safeguarding contact details can be found at the end of this policy.

## Related Policies

This safeguarding policy should be applied in conjunction with **Safeguarding Service Users from Abuse Policy and Reporting Procedures**, as well as Marcus & Marcus policies on complaints, physical restraint, the management of service users' money, whistleblowing, and our policy on mental capacity will be relevant in some circumstances.

## Training

All Marcus & Marcus employees receive training in identifying abuse or harm and their responsibilities under this policy as part of their induction programme and their ongoing training. Safeguarding training is updated on a regular scheduled basis at least annually.

All employees should read this policy and must raise any queries, in writing, with your line manager. This can then be discussed during supervision. All employees are reminded that training will take a number of different forms including Induction Training; Team Meetings, Video based training, policy observation questions, Supervisions, Shadowing, reflective practice through Structured Teaching and self-study packs.

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

Review date: 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2026

## Safeguarding Contact Details

Council	Telephone Numbers	Email	Address
<b>Enfield</b>	0208 379 5212	Community.alarm@enfield.gov.uk	The Social Services Duty Manager The Adult Learning Difficulties Team 2nd Floor St. Andrew's Court 1-4 River Front Enfield EN1 3SY
<b>Haringey</b>	Office Hours: 020 8489 1400  Out of Office Hours: 020 8489 0000	firstresponseteam@haringey.gov.uk	The Social Services Duty Manager The Adult Learning Difficulties Team Haringey Council 2nd Floor 40 Cumberland Road Wood Green London N22 7SG
<b>Southwark</b>	020 7525 1754	safeguardingadultscordinator@southwark.gov.uk	Safeguarding Adults Team PO Box 64529 London SE1P 5LX
<b>Barnet</b>	9am- 5pm, Mon to Fri: 020 8359 5000  Out of Office Hours: 020 8359 2000	socialcaredirect@barnet.gov.uk	North London Business Park Oakleigh Rd S London N11 1NP
<b>Camden</b>	020 7974 4000		London Borough of Camden 7th Floor 5 Pancras Square c/o Judd Street London WC1H 9JE
<b>Essex</b>	0345 603 7630	ESAB@essex.gov.uk	ESAB Support Team E3 (Zone 1) County Hall Chelmsford Essex CM1 1QH