

Safeguarding Policy

Date: August 2022

Reviewed and Amended: March 2026

1. Purpose

This policy defines how Capa First Response CIC (Capa) operates to safeguard children, adults at risk, families, staff and volunteers from harm, abuse or neglect.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Protect individuals from harm, abuse and neglect.
- Provide staff and volunteers with clear safeguarding principles and responsibilities.
- Ensure safe, relational and supportive working environments.
- Promote emotional wellbeing, dignity and safety for families and staff.
- Ensure safeguarding responsibilities are embedded across all online and face-to-face delivery.

Capa believes every individual regardless of age, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexuality or socioeconomic background has the right to feel safe and protected from harm.

Capa is committed to promoting:

- wellbeing
- harm prevention
- early intervention
- trauma-informed responses
- relational safeguarding practice
- effective multi-agency safeguarding procedures

Capa works in line with statutory responsibilities, government guidance and safeguarding best practice, including local Safeguarding Partnership Boards across the UK.

2. Legislative Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Children Acts 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Care Act (2014)
- Domestic Abuse Act (2021)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
- GDPR and Data Protection legislation

2. Definitions

Children

Defined as anyone under 18 years of age, or up to 25 years old where additional needs or vulnerabilities are identified.

Safeguarding Children

As defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023):

- protecting children from maltreatment, including within online and remote environments
- preventing impairment of health or development
- ensuring children grow up in safe and effective care
- taking action to enable positive life outcomes
- supporting families proactively when concerns arise

Adults at Risk

An adult at risk is defined under the *Care Act (2014)* as someone who:

- Has care and support needs.
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect.
- May not be able to protect themselves due to their care and support needs.

Safeguarding Staff

Capa recognises safeguarding also includes protecting staff, freelancers and volunteers from:

- harassment, bullying or discrimination
- emotional harm or vicarious trauma
- unsafe working environments
- burnout and safeguarding-related stress
- online abuse or inappropriate behaviour

4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Families accessing Capa services
- Children and young people connected to families accessing support
- Staff (paid and sessional)
- Freelancers and associate practitioners
- Volunteers
- Students and placements
- Board members
- Contractors and external professionals
- Online and digital delivery environments

5. Safeguarding Principles

Capa is committed to safeguarding all those it works with through a child-centred, relational and trauma-informed approach.

Core Principles

- The welfare and safety of children and adults at risk is paramount.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Families should be treated with dignity, compassion and respect.
- Safeguarding responses should be proportionate, relational and trauma-informed.
- Children and families should be listened to wherever possible.
- Practitioners should work collaboratively and transparently.
- Emotional wellbeing and practitioner wellbeing are important aspects of safe practice.

Commitment to Best Practice

Capa will:

- maintain safeguarding procedures aligned with statutory guidance
- ensure staff and volunteers receive appropriate training
- provide safeguarding supervision and consultation
- create a culture where concerns can be raised safely
- maintain clear reporting and escalation procedures
- work collaboratively with external safeguarding agencies

6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Safeguarding

Capa recognises that safeguarding risks and barriers to accessing support can be influenced by:

- poverty and financial hardship
- disability and neurodivergence
- race and ethnicity
- sexuality and gender identity
- trauma and adverse experiences
- migration and language barriers
- discrimination and exclusion
- poor mental health and isolation

We recognise that some families experience multiple and intersecting forms of disadvantage which may affect help-seeking, trust in services and emotional safety.

Safeguarding responses must remain:

- culturally sensitive
- neuro-affirming
- anti-discriminatory
- non-blaming
- accessible and inclusive

7. Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities

All staff, volunteers and freelancers must:

- complete safeguarding training and regular updates
- follow safeguarding procedures at all times
- maintain professional boundaries
- report concerns promptly
- record safeguarding concerns accurately
- participate in reflective practice and supervision
- contribute to safe and respectful working environments

All frontline practitioners:

- must complete safeguarding training every 3 years minimum
- must hold an enhanced DBS check renewed every 3 years or in line with government guidance
- must undertake online safeguarding and remote practice guidance where delivering virtual services

Failure to follow safeguarding procedures may result in disciplinary action.

8. Online and Remote Safeguarding

Capa delivers a significant proportion of its work online, including:

- Advice & Support sessions
- drop-ins
- groups
- workshops
- peer support spaces
- consultations
- practitioner-led reflective spaces

We recognise that online delivery means practitioners may work directly within family home environments and may witness or become aware of:

- emotional distress
- dysregulation
- conflict or aggression
- unsafe home environments



- safeguarding concerns involving children or adults

Safeguarding responsibilities apply equally within online and remote practice.

Safe Online Practice

Practitioners delivering online services must:

- follow Capa Online Service Safety and Governance Procedures
- maintain clear professional boundaries
- prioritise emotional and physical safety
- respond calmly to distress or escalation
- act on safeguarding concerns promptly
- record safeguarding concerns and actions taken
- seek consultation from safeguarding leads where appropriate

Children Present During Sessions

Many online sessions are intended as reflective spaces for parents and carers.

Wherever possible:

- children and young people should not overhear sensitive discussions
- families should access sessions from safe and confidential spaces
- practitioners should encourage privacy and emotional safety

Practitioners recognise this may not always be possible due to caring responsibilities or family circumstances and should respond sensitively and flexibly.

Managing Escalation During Online Sessions

If a child or young person becomes distressed, dysregulated or angry during a session, practitioners should:

- remain calm and emotionally regulated
- use de-escalation approaches
- avoid confrontation or shaming language
- support emotional and physical safety
- prioritise containment over intervention

Practitioners may pause or end sessions where:

- safety is compromised

- escalation increases
- confidentiality can no longer be maintained
- continuing the session may increase harm or distress

Any safeguarding concerns arising during sessions must be:

- recorded appropriately
- discussed with safeguarding leads where required
- followed up in line with safeguarding procedures

Immediate Risk

Where practitioners believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to a child or adult:

- emergency services may be contacted
- safeguarding referrals may be made
- welfare checks may be requested
- safeguarding leads must be informed as soon as possible

9. Internal Safeguarding for Staff

Capa recognises safeguarding responsibilities extend to staff wellbeing and safety.

Capa is committed to:

- reducing risk of burnout and vicarious trauma
- providing safeguarding supervision and debrief
- creating psychologically safe working environments
- responding to workplace bullying, harassment or discrimination
- supporting reflective practice and wellbeing

Capa will ensure:

- staff have safe working environments for remote practice
- safeguarding concerns involving staff are responded to promptly
- safeguarding consultation is available where required

10. Reporting Concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.

Concerns may relate to:

- children
- adults at risk
- parents/carers
- staff or volunteers
- online safeguarding concerns
- allegations against professionals

Capa will:

- respond promptly to safeguarding concerns
- maintain accurate records
- follow local safeguarding procedures
- cooperate with external safeguarding agencies
- ensure appropriate follow-up and support

11. Safeguarding Governance

Capa appoints:

- a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- a Deputy DSL
- clinical supervision support where required

The CEO and Board of Directors are responsible for:

- safeguarding oversight
- monitoring safeguarding compliance
- reviewing safeguarding practice
- ensuring policies remain current and effective

12. Interagency Collaboration

Capa works collaboratively with:

- local safeguarding partnerships
- schools and education providers
- health services
- CAMHS
- Early Help services
- social care

- police and statutory agencies
- community and voluntary sector organisations

Information sharing will be proportionate, lawful and focused on safety and wellbeing.

13. Safe Recruitment

Capa is committed to safe recruitment practices including:

- DBS checks where appropriate
- safeguarding-focused recruitment processes
- verification of qualifications and references
- safeguarding induction for all staff and volunteers

14. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where:

- legislation changes
- safeguarding incidents highlight learning needs
- service delivery changes significantly
- online safeguarding procedures are updated

Safeguarding learning from incidents, supervision, reviews and practitioner feedback will inform ongoing policy development.

15. Associated Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read alongside:

- Online Service Safety and Governance Procedures
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Incident Reporting Procedures
- Lone Working Procedures
- Confidentiality Policy
- DBS and Recruitment Procedures

16. Contact Information

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)



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