



Athena

SAFEGUARDING

Athena Policies

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Review date
2	15/03/2023	Athena Board	13/03/2024

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1. Overview

- 1.1. This policy outlines Athena's approach to safeguarding children and the way we intend to work with customers, agencies, and other organisations to protect and promote their welfare.
- 1.2. To provide a safeguarding framework that Athena can use to ensure the Group approach to safeguarding children is appropriate. To ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect children and young people from harm and promote their welfare.

2. What does safeguard children mean?

- 2.1. Safeguarding children is defined in 'Working together to safeguard children 2015' as:
 - a. Protecting children from maltreatment.
 - b. Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
 - c. Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
 - d. Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

3. Scope

- 3.1. We have a duty to help safeguard anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. Child abuse can include:
 - a. Physical abuse
 - b. Domestic abuse including violence.
 - c. Psychological or emotional abuse
 - d. Neglect
 - e. Sexual abuse
 - f. Spirit possession and witchcraft
 - g. Induced illness or fabrication
 - h. Forced marriage
 - i. Female genital mutilation
 - j. Infant oral mutilation
 - k. Trafficking
 - l. Bullying
 - m. E-abuse
 - n. Gang activity
 - o. County Lines exploitation
 - p. Violent extremism

4. Policy outline

- 4.1. The guiding principles in our approach to safeguarding children are based upon the key principle that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. We will ensure that the welfare of the child is paramount. We recognise the value and importance in seeking the voice of the child and responding to it appropriately.

4.2. Early help

- 4.2.1. Early help in providing support is more effective than reacting at a later stage.
- 4.2.2. Recruitment practices will reflect Safer Recruitment Guidance.

4.3. An integrated approach

4.3.1. Effective measures to safeguard children should not be seen in isolation from the wider range of support and services available to meet the needs of children and families.

4.4. A shared responsibility

4.4.1. Safeguarding children depends upon the effective joint working between agencies and practitioners that have different roles and expertise.

4.5. Sharing information

4.5.1. Sharing information is essential in working to safeguard children. Everyone has a responsibility to report and share their concerns to ensure all children and young people are safe.

4.6. Record keeping

4.6.1. Well kept and accurate records provide an essential underpinning to good safeguarding children practice and ensure accountability of agency involvement.

4.7. Supervision and staff training

4.7.1. Support, training, supervision, scrutiny, and evaluation of the work of those involved in safeguarding children will promote good standards of practice.

4.7.2. Processes are in place for investigating allegations against staff.

4.7.3. Well-publicised safeguarding lead officers and a Safeguarding Board Champion are in place.

4.8. Partnership

a. We will actively participate as a member of the Manchester's Safeguarding Children's Board and Strategic Housing Partnership.

b. We will align services with wider Government and Local Authority guidance and initiatives.

c. Learning from Serious Case Reviews will be promoted and embedded.

d. We will develop effective safeguarding networks.

5. Equality

5.1. The Equality Act 2010 puts a responsibility on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. This applies to the process of identification of need and risk faced by the individual child and the process of assessment. No child or group of children must be treated less favourably than others in being able to access effective services which meet their particular needs.

5.2. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy.

6. Method and approach

6.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with all procedures, guidance notes and complementary policies in order to meet its aims.

7. Responsibility

7.1. The Board and Chief Executive are responsible for ensuring that this policy complies with legislative requirements.

7.2. All managers, staff and contractors are responsible for implementing this policy.

7.3. Athena has named Safeguarding Champions that are responsible for the on-going development and delivery of safeguarding policy and practice that support interagency safeguarding arrangements.

8. Monitoring, review, and evaluation

8.1. Operations Committee will monitor performance relating to safeguarding.

8.2. Athena Board will receive updates on live cases and notifications of serious case reviews.

8.3. We will have in place arrangements for the regular and independent scrutiny of the effectiveness of our safeguarding arrangements.

8.4. This policy will be reconsidered against all relevant legislative changes and will be reviewed every three years as a matter of course.

9. Legislation

9.1. This policy and any subsequent procedures have been written in accordance with relevant guidance and legislation which includes:

- a. Children Act 1989
- b. Children Act 2004
- c. Children and Social Work Act 2017
- d. Equality Act 2010
- e. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015
- f. Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children Procedures
- g. Manchester - Early Help Strategy
- h. Manchester - Multi-Agency Levels of Need 2015
- i. General Data Protection Regulations 2016
- j. Human Rights Act 1998
- k. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child