# Safeguarding Children & Young People

**Introduction**

This document is intended to give guidance on protecting customers from abuse and responding to any evidence or suspicion of the abuse of a child.

The purpose of this policy:

* To protect children and young people who receive My Support and Care services (West Country) Ltd services. This would include the children of any adults who use our services.
* To provide staff and volunteers with the principles that guides our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

My Support and Care Services believes that a young child or a young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to provide support in a way that protects them.

**LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

This policy has been written on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children.

* Children Act 1989
* United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
* Data protection Act 1998
* Human Rights Act 1998
* Sexual offences Act 2003
* Children Act 2004
* Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups act 2006
* Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
* Children and Families Act 2014
* Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice 0-25 years – Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities: HM Government 2014
* Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children / young people, parents and carers: HM Government 2015
* Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children: HM Government 2015

This policy should read alongside our policies and procedures on:

* Recruitment
* Bullying
* Complaints
* Whistleblowing
* Health & Safety
* Lone working
* Quality assurance
* Code of conduct

**POLICY**

We recognise that:

* The welfare of the child is paramount as enshrined in the children Act 1989
* This includes all children regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, gender or sexual orientation
* That some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
* Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people’s welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

* Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for children and young people and a deputy lead.
* Adopting child protection and safeguarding practices throughout procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
* Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
* Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance.
* Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
* Recording and storing information professionally and securely and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters one to one discussions.
* Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know and involving children, young people, parents, carers & families appropriately.
* Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise.
* Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.
* Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children and young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health & safety measures in accordance with law and regulatory guidance.