



ADULTS SAFEGUARDING POLICY

**FOR EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL CARE
TRANSPORT SERVICES**

September 2023

24x7 Group believes that a child or young person or vulnerable adult 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 practice in a way that protects them.

24x7 Group – Safeguarding Policy

1. Definition

Safeguarding is a relatively new term which is broader than ‘child protection’ or ‘adult protection’ as it also includes prevention. Safeguarding is defined as:

- All agencies working with children, young people and their families, or vulnerable adults taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children’s welfare are minimised; and
- Where there are concerns about children or vulnerable adults’ welfare, all agencies taking appropriate actions to address those concerns

24x7 Group is aware that it has a duty to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse. Abuse can be defined as any behaviour which knowingly or unwittingly causes harm, endangers life or violates rights. Abuse may be physical, sexual, psychological, financial or material, or neglect.

It is possible that staff of 24x7 Group will become aware of actual or potential abuse when carrying out their work, and this Policy sets out 24x7 Group commitments to protecting these groups from harm.

2. Key aims

24x7 Group believes that adults and children have rights and that these should be respected and safeguarded.

24x7 Group is therefore committed to:

- Supporting and working in partnership with agencies tasked with vulnerable adults from abuse or harm.
- Having an appropriate staff recruitment policy and procedure – ensuring that all staff and volunteers have been DBS checked and that no-one has contact with our clients or their families before a satisfactory DBS report has been received. There is a separate DBS Check Policy in place.
- Making responsibilities regarding these issues clear to staff delivering services where there may be issues affecting these groups
- Ensuring that all groups irrespective of age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, nationality, or economic status have the right to be protected from abuse
- Responding quickly and effectively to issues when they arise
- Sharing information appropriately and on a need-to-know basis. A separate Data Protection and Information Sharing Policy and guidelines sets out the procedures for this.

3. Key principles

The following key principles apply to this Policy:

- The welfare of vulnerable adults is the key concern – and the need to protect them from abuse will override any other principles
- It is the responsibility of everyone within the organisation to report any concerns that they have promptly
- Wherever possible, client consent will be sought prior to disclosing any information. Whether this is possible will be considered on a case-by-case basis – and consent may not be required where there are exceptional circumstances due to the urgency or seriousness of the situation.
- 24x7 Group will comply with the relevant Local Authority Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults Protocols and referrals procedures.

4. Who this policy affects

This Policy affects all staff, all service users, and clients.

5. Implementation

To implement this Policy 24x7 Group will:

- Brief staff on this Policy and related procedures. All Staff Initial Training, Re-training and Annual Assessments will contain references to this policy.
- Continually develop and update our guidelines and procedures, which will be available to staff
- Provide training to staff on this Policy and related procedures on initial employment and at all training sessions, with at least an annual refresher training session for all staff.
- The policy will be published on the staff section of the website, copies will be available in all offices and staff rooms, and all staff will be provided with a copy on commencement of employment and annually thereafter.
- Work within the Local Authority Safeguarding protocols – applying these protocols when sharing or receiving information regarding a person (s) safety
- Promote the Policy to service Users, clients, and other stakeholders
- Identify a lead staff member with responsibility for implementing this policy and overseeing the management of individual cases. Mr Ashley Mahoney, Operations Director, will have overall day to day responsibility for overseeing this policy.

6. Monitoring and Review

6.1 This Policy will be reviewed at least annually to ensure that it complies with legislative and regulatory requirements and best practice. It is subject to approval by 24x7 Group Directors

6.2 Performance against the Policy will be monitored through:

- Discussions of safeguarding issues as part of the induction, regular one to one and group supervision processes
- Keeping statistical information regarding any issues that are reported – and reporting these to the Directors, and relevant Local Authority on a regular basis

7. Related guidance, policy and procedures:

- DBS check Policy
- Data Protection and Information Sharing Policy and Guidelines
- Staff Recruitment

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect vulnerable adults, namely:

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Regulated Activities) (Coronavirus) Order 2020
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the vulnerable Adult is paramount, as enshrined in the Safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006.
- all Vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep young people safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting vulnerable adult protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff
- developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about vulnerable adults and good practice with these groups, parents, staff and volunteers

- sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed: 02/10/23

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. T. Mahoney', written over a faint horizontal line.

Mr A. T. Mahoney
Managing Director

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

24x7 Ltd regards the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults and good working practice as a priority. Our safeguarding policy sets out our commitment and working practices when dealing with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

24x7 Ltd is committed to ensuring that our staff, drivers and passenger assistants working with Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults:

- Will undergo a Criminal Records Bureau check at enhanced level
- Will have two references taken up

We will ensure that our staff

- Are adequately trained and supervised
- Understand and follow our Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

Definition:

The term 'safeguarding' can apply to both adults and children and is about protecting them and preventing their abuse or neglect and educating our staff to recognise the signs and dangers. Abuse can be physical, emotional or psychological, sexual or financial.

Safeguarding usually refers to those who may be vulnerable. Within the 24x7 Ltd workplace this can include:

- children under the age of 18;
- people with physical, visual, hearing or learning disability;
- people with mental health issues;
- the elderly, frail or ill;
- those suffering from any form of domestic abuse

Our organisation:

24x7 Ltd recognises that safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of all of our staff, as well as others outside our organisation.

We recognise the unique and individual worth of a person regardless of age and we are committed to protecting and safeguarding children young people and vulnerable adults.

We exercise care in the appointment of all those working with children young people and vulnerable adults. We are committed to following statutory and specialist guidelines when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

As part of our commitment, stated in our Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy, the Managing Director, Mr Andy Mahoney, has the overall responsibility for ensuring the policy is in place and is being acted upon.

The daily managing and monitoring of the policy is the responsibility of the Operations Director, Mr Ashley Mahoney.

The policy will be reviewed annually by Mr Andy Mahoney and updated where necessary.

Reporting Procedure

Any member of staff with any safeguarding concern should at the earliest opportunity raise this concern directly with Mr Gavin Roberts, Operations Director.

Should 24x7 Ltd have any concerns regarding the policy or if there are any reported incidents it will seek appropriate advice and will contact the relevant Education or Adult Centre, the relevant County Council and the appropriate Statutory Authorities.

This policy compliments our Equal Opportunities Policy, Health and Safety Policy and Employee Policies contained in the staff handbook.

The policy may be viewed at or a copy obtained from 24x7 Ltd. A copy is available for viewing or downloading within the Staff section of the Company's website. A copy of this statement and the associated policy is given to all employees upon their commencement of employment. Any changes in the policy and/or Annual updates of the policy are notified to all employees.

All employees are required to sign, and to annually renew their signature, to confirm that they have received, read and understood, and agree to abide by, the Company's Safeguarding Policy.

Safeguarding Statement and associated Safeguarding Policy reviewed August 30th, 2023 by Mr Andy Mahoney, Managing Director, 24x7 Ltd.

Next policy review date on or before December 2023.

Signed *A.T. Mahoney*
Name Mr Andrew Mahoney
Position Managing Director

Date 30/12/2022

Safe Practice, safe children and safe vulnerable adults: A code of conduct for our drivers/escorts:

Like all codes of conduct this document is intended as a safeguard for both passengers and staff. It is hoped the code will protect service users from the possibility of abuse and staff from the possibility of misunderstandings which can lead to allegations of misconduct being made.

1. Starting out safe; Ground rules you must follow:

- Behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner to all staff pupils and vulnerable adults. This includes using appropriate language and wearing appropriate dress and keeping a calm atmosphere in the vehicle including keeping the volume of any music low.
- Use your mobile to report difficulties in managing behaviour and ensure you report any concerns or incidents as soon as possible on the day
- Undertake training if requested to do so relating to child protection, adult safeguarding procedures, or the management of children or vulnerable adults with special needs
- If you are worried about something with a service user report it, to the school, college, other establishment, and let your Contract Manager know that you have a concern. Nobody will criticise you for this as service users' needs and behaviour change all the time, the key is not to struggle on until the problem becomes serious.

2. Staying safe, things you must not do:

Do not behave in a way that could lead a reasonable observer to question your conduct, intentions or suitability to have direct care for other people's children or for vulnerable adults:

- Do not seat a lone passenger in the front of the vehicle.
- Do not discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards any service user, never build 'special' relationships with individuals and don't confer favours on particular service users.
- Do not make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet service users outside of your work
- Do not give your mobile phone number or other personal details to a service user and do not accept mobile numbers if offered to you by them.
- Do not handle a service user's mobile phone even if offered or allow them access to yours.
- Do not use your mobile phone or any other recording instrument to take pictures of service users or allow them to take pictures of you.
- Do not allow service users to see any stored pictures on your mobile phone or allow them to hear inappropriate ring tones or messages.

- You must not have contact with children or vulnerable adults who are service users through any personal social medium this includes any social networking sites such as *Facebook, MySpace, Bebo*, also blogs, micro blogs such as *twitter* or by means of chatrooms, forums or podcasts. The internet is fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances or emerging media – but the principles set out in this document must be followed irrespective of the media.
- If you have an account on Facebook, Bebo or another social networking site, make sure you set your account settings so only your friends can see your wall and your photos
- Never share your networking account access details with service users.
- Be wary of posting photos or other personal details on networking sites as these may be misunderstood or possibly misused by service users.
- On gaming sites, use a made-up name and don't share any personal details.
- Do not develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with service users.
- Do not push, hit, kick, punch, slap, throw missiles at or smack a service user or threaten to do so.
- Do not touch service users in a manner which is gratuitous or would be considered sexual, threatening or intimidating.
- It is however acceptable to hold a child's hand, or hold or support a vulnerable adult's arm when, for instance, crossing a road, or car park; it is also acceptable to 'steer' a child by placing your hand(s) on their shoulder(s). Clearly you will want to prevent a passenger from hurting themselves but do report any service user in your care who appears to need a lot of physical intervention from you as soon as possible.
- Do not be sarcastic, make remarks or 'jokes' of a personal, sexual, racist, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise offensive nature to service users.
- Do not embarrass or humiliate your service users.
- Do not give or receive gifts from service users.
- Do not allow, encourage or condone service users to act in an illegal, improper or unsafe manner e.g. smoking, drinking alcohol

Additional Guidelines for drivers and escorts working on Adult Social Care (ASC) contract work with vulnerable adults:-

i.

Your attitude is vital and it will help both you and the vulnerable adult in your care if you are patient and respectful. These are not jobs that can be rushed in order to get on to the next one as the service user will need you to be calm and aware that things may take a while or, occasionally, be frustrating.

ii.

Be very clear about arrival times, who you are, and where you are taking the vulnerable adult in your care. Vulnerable adults with memory difficulties may find it helpful to be reminded of the purpose of the journey on the way and you must always ensure that you see them safely delivered into the front door of their destination and that they are met on arrival.

iii..

Make sure you have read the above safeguarding guidelines and know who to report any concerns to. If you are concerned about a vulnerable adult then tell the centre you that are taking them to and your Contract Manager. Remember; don't worry about doing the right thing, worry about not doing anything.

iv.

Keep conversations with vulnerable adults, carers, and college/establishment staff light and professional. Don't leave yourself open to any misunderstandings.