



# Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

## Policy & Guidance

(For Child Protection, please refer to the Rutland County Council Safeguarding Children policy.)

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## 1. Introduction

An effective whole service Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy is one that provides clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with 'safeguarding adults' issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the service's commitment to the development of good practice and sound internal service procedures. This ensures that safeguarding vulnerable adults' concerns will be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the adult.

The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare, safety and health of the vulnerable adults we work with by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate.

We recognise that Rutland Adult Learning Service does not operate in isolation. The welfare of vulnerable adults is a corporate responsibility of the entire local authority, working in partnership with other public agencies, schools, the voluntary sector and service users and carers.

This Policy on safeguarding vulnerable adults has been devised to complement the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults partnership, multi-agency policy and procedure. The Government's long-standing 'No Secrets' document has been replaced by the Dept. of Health & Social Care 'Care and Support Statutory Guidance' – Safeguarding (updated March 2024)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance#safeguarding-1>

**Decisions by staff whether or not to report concerns of abuse/mistreatment are not a matter of individual conscience but are considered a professional duty.**

### **Who is an adult in need of Safeguarding?**

Any person aged eighteen or over who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

However, where someone is 18 or over but is still receiving children's services and a safeguarding issue is raised, the matter should be dealt with through adult safeguarding arrangements. Where appropriate, adult safeguarding services should involve the local authority's children's safeguarding colleagues as well as any relevant partners (for example, the Police or NHS) or other persons relevant to the case

### **What constitutes abuse?**

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship, including online and peer-on-peer, and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. Abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.

'Significant harm' should be taken to include: ill treatment including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical; the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in, physical or mental health; and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

## **2. Rutland Adult Learning & Skills Service Safeguarding vulnerable adults Policy**

### **Multi-Agency Policy Statement:**

**All adults in need of safeguarding have the right to live their lives free from abuse of any description.**

**All agencies and individuals that have contact with adults in need of safeguarding have a duty to protect them from abuse.**

**Where abuse is reported to or suspected by any person in any agency the response will be prompt and in line with the Multi-Agency Procedures.**

### **Purpose of the Policy**

This policy aims to provide all staff within the Rutland Adult Learning Service a clear framework to ensure that all policies, procedures and practice relating to safeguarding vulnerable adults are consistent and in line with the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency policy and procedures available at <https://www.lradultsafeguarding.co.uk/> updated regularly and subject to the Care Act 2014.

### **These guidelines and procedures are designed to:**

- Prevent the abuse and mistreatment of vulnerable adults
- Promote increased awareness and recognition of the issues surrounding the abuse and mistreatment of vulnerable adults.
- Ensure all staff working within RALSS understand their responsibility to protect vulnerable adults from harm whenever they are in a position to do so.
- Ensure that when abuse/mistreatment is suspected, appropriate action is taken to safeguard vulnerable adults from further harm and exploitation.
- Ensure that allegations about abuse/mistreatment are investigated thoroughly, efficiently and consistently.
- Respect the rights of all people to live their chosen lifestyle with privacy, dignity, independence, choice and fulfilment.

### **Procedures, Practice and Responsibilities**

Where it is believed that a vulnerable adult is suffering from, or is at risk of, significant harm, we will follow the procedures set out in the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Multi-agency policy and procedures. The Rutland Adult Learning Service has developed this Policy and Guidance document to complement these procedures.

All adults working with or on behalf of vulnerable adults have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare. There are, however, key people within RALSS, and Adult Social Care who have specific responsibilities under safeguarding adults' procedures.

The Designated Person for safeguarding within RALSS is:

#### **Dean Papworth**

His responsibility is to respond to safeguarding situations, concerns and queries as they arise. He will ensure that information is accurately recorded and stored, facilitate inter-agency liaison to seek advice

and ensure RALSS staff have access to the most current and relevant information. Please see page 9 for more details on the RALSS Designated Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults role.

The RALSS Team Manager will support both the RALSS Designated Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and all other RALSS staff in fulfilling their duties within the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults agenda. This will specifically include supporting relevant training for staff and ensuring new members of staff are made fully aware of their duties to Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and to ensure they are aware of the RALSS Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Guidance.

## **Confidentiality**

There may be some anxieties about legal or ethical restrictions on sharing information, particularly with other agencies. Managers in particular should be aware of the law and should comply with codes of conduct or other guidance available to professional bodies. These rarely provide an absolute barrier to disclosure. Everyone should be prepared to exercise judgement. Failure to pass on information, which might have prevented a tragedy, could result in criticism both of individuals and organisations.

A decision about whether to disclose information may be particularly difficult if it is considered that disclosure may damage a learner relationship. Wherever possible agreement to disclose should be sought from the person concerned, and if the decision is to act against that individual's wishes, an explanation should be offered.

There will be no breach of confidence if the person to whom the duty of confidence is owed has the mental capacity to give consent and in fact consents to the disclosure.

The Caldicott Committee in the Report on the Review of Patient-Identifiable Information (December 1997) summarised the following principles:

- Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis when it is in the best interests of the service user.
- Confidentiality must not be confused with secrecy.
- Informed consent should be obtained but, if this is not possible and other Safeguarded Adults are at risk, it may be necessary to override the requirement.
- It is inappropriate for agencies to give assurances of absolute confidentiality in cases where there are concerns about abuse, particularly in those situations when other vulnerable people may be at risk.

## **Race, Ethnicity and Culture**

- All staff should be aware of their own prejudices and unconscious bias in order to avoid perpetuating racial and cultural stereotypes and therefore avoid being diverted from safeguarding the vulnerable adult.
- All workers must be aware of differing models of family life that can vary according to race, culture, religion, class, ability and community. Each offers its own way of meeting a vulnerable adult's needs, has its own strengths and must be respected in all aspects of Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults.
- All workers must adopt an anti-discriminatory approach in Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults. Adopting an anti-racist perspective in adult safeguarding does not mean legal issues or procedures should be undermined or ignored.
- Families and their vulnerable adults whose first language is not English should be provided with translation services.

## **Physical Contact**

- Physical contact, however well intentioned, may be misconstrued by a learner, parent, carer or observer. As a general principle, staff must not make gratuitous physical contact with their learners.

- Physical contact may be a necessary part of teaching some vulnerable adults, for example those with profound and multiple difficulties. Staff should be aware of the limits within such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of such contact being misconstrued.
- There may be occasions where a distressed vulnerable adult needs comfort and reassurance such as a carer would give. Staff should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same learner over a period of time.

## **Online Learning**

- Induction includes a method for indicating the need for immediate help, using the Signal for Help instituted by [www.canadianwomen.org](http://www.canadianwomen.org)
- A signal will be followed up by a phone call to ask for more information but using closed questions in case the vulnerable person can be overheard.
- If needed, the Safeguarding Officer can be contacted to obtain contact details, or addresses, to be passed on to the police.
- The usual referrals and reports will be made to the Rutland County Council Safeguarding Team if necessary.

## **Online Teaching and Learning – protocol for tutors and staff**

### **All online teaching**

Professional boundaries and standards or “netiquette” will be upheld.

A Risk Assessment will have been completed by the Team Leader if staff are using devices other than RCC-approved media.

- Staff will introduce safeguarding principles and include a discussion on the ‘signal for help’ including an agreed way to respond to this signal. – see below
- Staff will remind learners about any agreed microphone/camera on/off agreements. (Remain watchful for any breaches of these agreements and decide whether they are an indication of learner in danger or indicators of abuse.)
- Conduct teaching from a neutral room/background and if practical, remove personal items from view. Avoid bedrooms if possible.
- Staff to position themselves away from partners, children, pets and if possible to be alone in the room.
- Staff to ensure they have up-to-date telephone and email contact details for all learners in the group, their line manager and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Staff to avoid wearing stripes or heavy patterns which can distort the screen for others.
- Staff to test audio and video prior to session beginning.
- Staff to have, or have scheduled, up-to-date safeguarding training including safeguarding online.
- Staff to dress appropriately and use appropriate language.
- Staff should not eat or drink alcohol during sessions.

### **For 1:1 teaching**

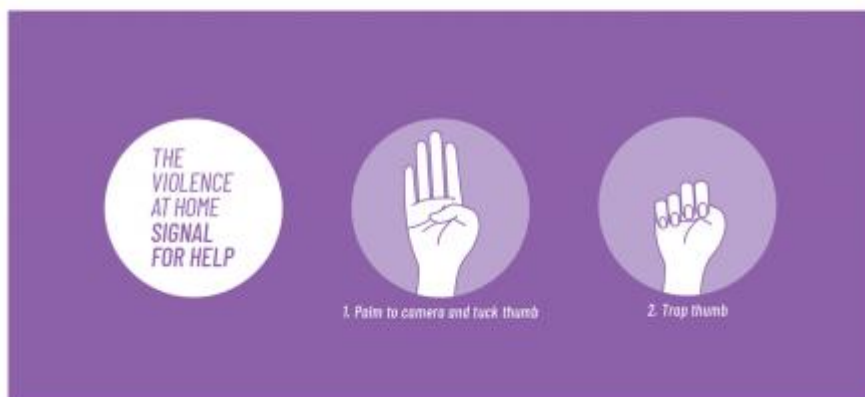
- Have a clear justification for holding a 1:1 session.
- Ensure that the session is held only at the time and on the date agreed in advance with the learner.
- When the learner is a child or vulnerable adult or has additional learning needs, gain parental/carers permission for the session to be held ahead of time.
- Agree all protocols with parents/carers ahead of time.

## The 'Signal for Help'.

The following 'signal for help' was devised by the Canadian Women's Foundation during lockdown.



## Safeguarding online

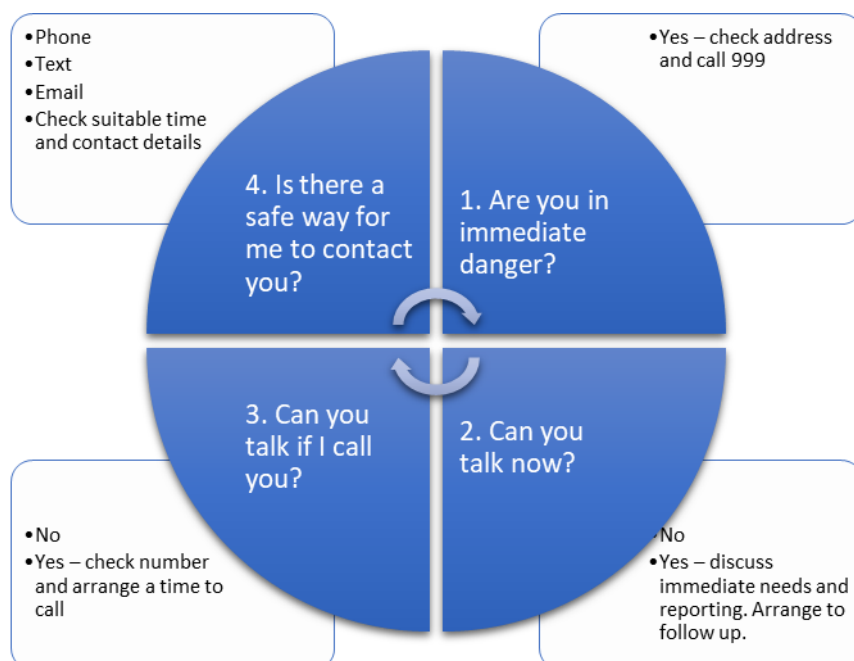


At Induction learners should be told/reminded that they can raise safeguarding issues with the tutor or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The tutor should remain watchful for the use of the signal. This signal can be discussed and demonstrated during Induction but showing the poster on the screen should be avoided so that it cannot be accessed by someone other than tutor and learners. Response to this signal will depend very much on the circumstances but a 'thumbs-up' from the tutor would indicate to the learner that the plea for help has been seen. At this point, if the learner is able to talk, he or she should give a 'thumbs-up' too; if unable to talk, the signal for help should be continued. All other learners should do nothing and await the tutor's signal.

### Action

It might be appropriate for the tutor to close down the class on some pretext and say that he/she will be in touch with all learners individually to discuss homework, thereby giving the tutor the opportunity to phone the learner involved.

OR learners can be moved into breakout rooms for a private chat or a phone call. A text might be appropriate.



In both cases 'Yes/no' answers should be made possible to the following questions:

All the above must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and a reporting form completed – see Safeguarding Policy.

## Radicalisation and Prevent

The UK National Strategy for tackling terrorism, CONTEST was published in July 2011. The strategy has four broad strands:

- Prevent:** Tackle the radicalisation of individuals
- Pursue:** Identify, monitor and disrupt those suspected of terrorism, or linked to terrorism
- Protect:** Take action to protect the public and key national services from targeting by terrorists
- Prepare:** For the consequences of an attack

In February 2015, the Counterterrorism and Security Act passed into legislation and it states that a “specified authority must in the exercise of its functions have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The act lists those local authorities covered by the provision and includes local government.

In Rutland the Prevent Strategy is delivered through the Community Safety Partnership, with leadership under the direction of the Environment, Planning and Transport of the County Council. The Community Safety Partnership has established a Prevent Partnership Group across Leicestershire, Leicester City and Rutland and in partnership with Leicestershire Police.

1. If a worker identifies an individual who may be at risk of Radicalisation, then they should immediately notify the lead officer in the service. They should not make Prevent referrals directly and an internal safeguarding referral **MUST** be completed to allow the organisation’s DSL or Deputy to assess & authorise the appropriateness of sharing personal data with external bodies. Check the individual’s home address to check that referrals are made to the correct geographical area.
  - [Refer someone to the Prevent Team | Leicestershire Police \(leics.police.uk\)](https://www.leics.police.uk)
  - [Refer someone to the Prevent Team | Lincolnshire Police \(lincs.police.uk\)](https://www.lincs.police.uk)

## Allegations against a member of staff

If a member of RALSS receives an allegation against a professional, teaching or non-teaching, they **must** follow the procedures as outlined in the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adult Multi-Agency policy and procedures.

<http://www.llradultsafeguarding.co.uk>

## Safe Recruitment Practice

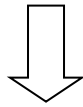
RALSS follow the safe recruitment procedures as laid down by Rutland County Council.

### 3. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Procedures – Guidance for RALSS staff

This Guidance has been devised to complement existing guidance to RALSS staff. It draws from the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Partnership Multi-Agency policy and procedures manual, and does not replace it.

**RALSS staff/tutor has concerns about a vulnerable adult's welfare or receives a disclosure from a learner, carer, or parent.**

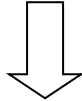
- DO NOT promise to keep it a secret or tell only specific people
- DO NOT interrogate or ask leading questions
- DO believe the vulnerable adult.
- DO ensure appropriate people are informed IMMEDIATELY.



***Always inform the Designated Person for Safeguarding at RALSS of your concerns.***

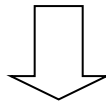
**As an Officer of the Local Authority, you remain responsible for acting upon any information of a Safeguarding nature that you become aware of, even if you discuss it within the learner's care environment.**

You may wish at any stage to discuss your concerns with the RALSS Designated Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults. Any action taken by either yourself or the Designated Person for Safeguarding at RALSS will be recorded (use Record Form in Appendix 5)



If you pass your concerns to the Designated Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults at RALSS, they may decide to:

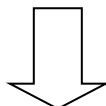
- Take no further action other than make a record of your concerns
- Discuss the concerns with a Duty Social Worker
- Make a referral to Adult Social Care Service
- Refer the vulnerable adult to another agency for additional support



If at this stage, the Designated Person for RALSS feels no further action is necessary and you disagree, you may decide to:

- Discuss your concerns with a Duty Social Worker
- Make a referral to Adult Social Care Service

Inform the care environment of your decision if appropriate. **It is your responsibility to ensure action is taken to ensure the vulnerable adult's welfare, even if others disagree with you**



Keep a copy of the Referral and Information form and store in RALSS Safeguarding file (*copies of the referral form can be found at appendix five*)



**Remember:**

- Should you wish to talk through your concerns at any point, contact the RALSS Designated Person for Safeguarding. Contact details can be found on page 13.
- Throughout the whole process, document your discussions, who you spoke to, including the date and time and clearly record actions agreed. Store this information with the RALSS designated Safeguarding Officer. (See page 12 for further details on Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults storage procedures for RALSS).
- Records should use clear, straightforward language avoiding departmental abbreviations. They should be concise and factual but also differentiate between opinion, judgement and hypothesis. Any decisions made should be recorded and the reasons for doing so clear.
- You have a legal duty to act independently of the RALSS and/or the Duty Social Worker if you feel the Vulnerable Adult is in need of services or protection.
- Should the RALSS Designated Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults be unavailable, contact the Adult Social Care Team for further advice. Contact details are on page 13. You can request a consultation with a Duty Social Worker to seek further advice at any time. If you need to make an urgent referral outside of office hours, you should call the Out of Hours Adult Social Care on **01572 758341**.
- A referral should be made when we consider that a vulnerable adult has needs, which cannot be met solely by the services or resources within RALSS, and where, following an assessment of the situation, we believe co-ordinated intervention is required to promote, safeguard or protect the welfare of the vulnerable adult.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Reason for Review</b>	<b>Next Scheduled Review</b>
October 2014	Updated as per two year cycle	October 2016
April 2018	Review re GDPR compliance	April 2020
August 2020	Updated as per cycle	August 2022
July 2021	Prevent update and additions	August 2022
Aug 22	Updated as per cycle	Aug 24
Aug 23	End of Sub-C	Aug 24
Jul 24	Updated as per 2 year cycle	Jul 26

## APPENDIX ONE

### RALSS Designated Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Roles and Responsibilities

The RALSS Designated Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults will:

- make themselves available to colleagues wherever practicable to discuss any concerns or queries colleagues may have, or to offer support prior, during and after a Safeguarding Adult Protection issue.
- act as a conduit of information for RALSS and will signpost their colleagues to those agencies that can offer the most appropriate advice
- be responsible for advising on the procedures for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults that are to be followed. The Designated Person is not responsible either for action taken by a colleague or undertaking action on a colleague's behalf, unless by prior agreement.
- ensure, along with the RALSS Team Manager, that they have the relevant level of training.
- place Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults as a Standing Item on the agenda at all RALSS management meetings.
- circulate any relevant information to the RALSS management team.
- take advice if necessary from outside agencies to enable them to support colleagues competently and confidently
- support colleagues to ensure all information of a 'Safeguarding Vulnerable adults' nature is stored securely and in line with RALSS policy. Following GDPR guidance (May 2018), documents relating to vulnerable learners and safeguarding incidents will be stored in accordance with Inspire Education Group's (sub-contractor) policy i.e. for 5 years after the learner has left RALSS.
- keep the ALMT up to date and share good practice on Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults issues.

## APPENDIX TWO

### Record Keeping

- Any information of a Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults nature needs to be recorded and stored securely in line with guidance. This is to ensure work is accountable and focused. It is also an important part of multi-agency working and continuity when individual workers are unavailable or change. Records are also an essential part of evidence for any investigations and inquiries and staff always need to be aware that they may also be disclosed in court proceedings.
- A separate Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults file needs to be created in which to store the records of any Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults issues. Any subsequent documentation such as referral forms, reports or minutes of meetings must also be stored in here. Notes following discussions with the Designated Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults or other agencies should also be stored here.
- This file will be stored securely in a limited access folder: <O:\People\T5\Adult Learning\1A New File Architecture\Leadership and Management\Safeguarding\Confidential Safeguarding Records>
- The Record Form (see Appendix 5) should be used for any discussions between the member of staff and the RALSS Designated Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults. They should record their conversation and agree the content once it has been written to ensure an accurate account of their discussion. Both should also sign the record. If it was a telephone discussion or location makes this impossible, the person who completes the record must ensure that the other person countersigns it as soon as possible.
- The Record Form is also to be used to record any other discussions had regarding the adult, which relate to any Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults concerns.
- The RALSS Designated Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults will support colleagues to ensure all information of a Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults nature is stored securely and in line with RALSS policy.
- Any information that needs to be filed in the Confidential Safeguarding Records folder can be scanned and saved there directly by the Designated Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults. Filing must be completed immediately, if possible or kept in a sealed envelope in a locked cabinet and the Safeguarding Lead informed.
- As with all other learner related information, information relating to Safeguarding Vulnerable issues must not be removed from the office without prior agreement of the RALSS designated officer.
- If necessary, the RALSS Designated Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults will agree a timescale for a follow-up discussion with colleagues following a Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults discussion. That date should be recorded and noted in diaries to act as an aide memoir.
- At all times, staff should be aware that anything they write may be seen by parents, carers, learners and other agencies and or used as evidence in court. Therefore, information must be factual. Any expression of opinion must be clearly recorded as such and justifiable.
- Following GDPR guidance (May 2018), documents relating to vulnerable learners and safeguarding incidents will be stored for 5 years after the learner has left RALSS.

## APPENDIX THREE Contact Details

### **Rutland Adult Learning Service**

The RALSS Designated Persons for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults are:

**Dean Papworth**  
[dpapworth@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:dpapworth@rutland.gov.uk)  
01572 758122

### **Adult Social Services Duty Desk: 01572 758341**

Rutland County Council  
Catmose  
Oakham  
Rutland  
LE15 6HP

Report your concern using the online referral form:  
<https://socialcare.rutland.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/safeguardinginfo>

You can request a consultation with a Duty Social Worker to discuss your concerns if you are unable to speak to the RALSS Designated Person for Safeguarding Adults, and to enable you to make a decision on whether to refer or not.

If a concern is raised regarding someone under 18, please contact the **Children's Duty Desk: 01572 758407**

## APPENDIX FOUR References

The following documents and websites should be read and used in conjunction with this policy. More information can be found at [www.rutland.gov.uk](http://www.rutland.gov.uk)

- Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Partnership (Multi-Agency Procedures and Guidelines.) <http://www.llradultsafeguarding.co.uk>
- *Action on Elder Abuse Response Line: Offers a confidential help line providing information and emotional support. 080 8808 8141.*
- *The Anne Craft Trust: Maintains information exchange network, raising the general level of awareness of issues relating to the abuse of people with learning disabilities. 0115 979 9987.*
- Department of Health [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)
- *Social Care Institute for Excellence. [www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk)*

**APPENDIX FIVE  
Reporting Form**

Learner: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Centre/Venue : \_\_\_\_\_

Person completing notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Time	Person spoken to	Discussion notes	Action agreed

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**Store this record in the RALSS Safeguarding Adults confidential file.**