



Reviewed: April 8th, 2026

Author: FL

Review date: April 2027

Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

Defiant Sports is dedicated to promoting inclusive sports participation for people of all abilities and socioeconomic backgrounds. The organization recognizes the barriers that people with disabilities and those from low-income families face when it comes to accessing sports opportunities. Therefore, Defiant Sports is committed to breaking down these barriers by providing affordable and accessible sports programming, equipment, and facilities. The organisation's goal is to create a welcoming and inclusive space where everyone can participate and thrive in sports, regardless of their ability or financial situation.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect vulnerable adults who receive Defiant Sports' services from harm.
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as our service users, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of vulnerable adults.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Defiant Sports, including senior managers and the board of directors, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

Supporting Documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

We Believe That:

- Vulnerable adults should never experience abuse of any kind.
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all vulnerable adults, to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them.

We Recognize That:

- The welfare of vulnerable adults is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we make.
- Working in partnership with vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults.



- All adults, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experience, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Extra safeguards may be needed to keep adults who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

Who is a Vulnerable Adult?

A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 or over who is or may be in need of community care services because of disability, age or illness, and who:

- Is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or
- Is unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation.

Vulnerable adults could include older people, people with a visual or hearing impairment, physical disability, learning disabilities or mental health problems and people living with HIV or AIDS.

What is Abuse?

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

- It may consist of a single act or repeated acts.
- It may be planned or unplanned.
- It may be the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.
- It may happen when a vulnerable adult is persuaded to enter into a transaction to which they have not consented or cannot consent.

Abuse can take Many Forms

- **Physical abuse** – for example, hitting, pushing, shaking, over-medicating or otherwise causing physical harm.
- **Sexual abuse** – for example, unwanted touching, kissing or sexual activity. Or where the vulnerable adult cannot or does not give their consent.
- **Psychological / emotional abuse** – including verbal abuse, intimidation, isolation, humiliation, bullying or the use of threats.
- **Financial abuse** – theft, exploitation, the illegal or improper use of a person's money, property, pension book, bank account or other belongings.
- **Neglect** – the repeated deprivation of help that a vulnerable adult needs which, if withdrawn, will cause them to suffer.
- **Discriminatory abuse** – including racist or sexist abuse, abuse based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Where can it Happen?



Abuse can take place in any setting:

- In their own home.
- In someone else's home.
- In a residential or nursing home.
- In a day centre, adult education centre or other establishment.
- In a hospital or GP surgery.
- At work.
- In a public place.

Who Abuses?

The person responsible for the abuse is often well-known to the adult being abused. They may be:

- A relative, friend or neighbour.
- A paid or volunteer carer.
- A professional worker.
- Another resident or service user.
- An occasional visitor or service provider.

What Should You Do?

It is not the responsibility of anyone working for Defiant Sports, either in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not a vulnerable adult is being abused or that abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns:

- Talk to the person in a safe and private place.
- Listen sensitively but be careful not to ask leading questions. Try not to show you are shocked.
- Find out what the person wants and explain that you will discuss the situation with your line / senior manager.
- Contact your line / senior manager who will refer the allegation to the social services department, who may involve the police.

What You Should Not Do

- Do not confront the person you think is responsible for the abuse.
- Do not destroy any evidence.
- Do not start to investigate the situation.
- Do not be judgemental.
- Do not make any promises you cannot keep.
- Do not take the allegations lightly or dismiss them.

Confidentiality



Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and shared on a need-to-know basis only.

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The vulnerable adult's name and date of birth.
- The vulnerable adult's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visual bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incident/s.
- The vulnerable adult's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have any carers / relatives been contacted? If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

What Will Happen Next?

What happens next will depend on the wishes of the person and the seriousness of the situation. If they are in physical danger, ensuring their safety will be most important.

In response to the referral, trained staff will carry out a careful and sensitive enquiry. Information and advice will be offered so that the person and their family can make an informed choice, care will be taken to support and protect them.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff or volunteer there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation.
- An adult protection investigation.
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The result of the police and an adult protection investigation may well influence a disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.