

New Stoke Newington Shul

‘Adults at Risk’ - Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Approved by the Board of Trustees June 14th 2026

This policy is based on the policy developed by Masorti Judaism. We are grateful for their permission to use their work on this policy.

Section 1: Synopsis

1. NSNS has a responsibility to prevent, and report concerns about the abuse, neglect and ill treatment of adults who are at risk of being harmed.
2. Anyone who is employed or volunteers for, or on behalf of, NSNS, regardless of the type or amount of contact they have with adults who are at risk of abuse or adults at risk of harm, has a role to play in safeguarding and protecting them.
3. They must:
 - a. Know how to recognise potential abuse of adults at risk of harm.
 - b. Know what to do when safeguarding concerns arise.
 - c. Understand what NSNS expects of them in terms of their own behaviour and actions.
4. An adult at risk of harm can be anyone over the age of eighteen, including service users, staff, or volunteers. Whilst personal characteristics may make an individual more vulnerable i.e., disability and communication difficulties, it is the situation around an individual which may increase risk or place them at potential risk of harm. It is therefore vital to be open to the possibility that any adult may be at risk and that this can be temporary or on-going depending on the support and protective factors around them.
5. This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and volunteers (including trustees and NSNS Council members).

Section 2: Legal context

6. NSNS adheres to legislation and statutory guidance enforced in England. The relevant law is the Care Act 2014, which came into effect in 2015, and is the primary legislation in England for the support and protection of adults. The legislation sets out how people's care and support needs should be met and introduces the right to an assessment for anyone, including carers and self-funders, in need of support.

Section 3: Terminology

7. For the purposes of this policy and procedures, the following terms are used:

Adult at risk: An adult at risk is ‘any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and support’.

Adult at risk of harm: is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their: personal characteristics which may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain; life circumstances which may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors; and environmental living conditions.

Adult in need of protection is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a. Personal characteristics AND/OR
- b. Life circumstances AND
- c. Who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights, or other interests AND
- d. Where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

Safeguarding: This describes the activity that is undertaken to protect adults at risk from abuse, harm, ill-treatment, and neglect.

Abuse: This is the ill-treatment or causing harm to an adult at risk. A person may abuse or neglect an adult at risk by inflicting harm or by knowingly failing to act to prevent harm. Adults can be abused in a family, at a community fundraising event, in any type of institution/organisation, by those known to them or others, for example by those responsible for organising, participating, or providing support or care, including a current or ex. Intimate partner.

Prevention: This is how we seek to reduce the abuse of adults at risk occurring in the first place. This includes training, guidance and support for employees and volunteers, as well as for those receiving services. An whole organisational approach is necessary for the prevention of abuse,

Section 4: Key Principles

8. NSNS's approach to safeguarding adults at risk is based on the following principles:
 - a. All adults have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse, regardless of age, ability, gender identity, sex, racial heritage, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or personal characteristics which may indicate additional vulnerabilities.
 - b. The best interests of an at risk adult are paramount in all safeguarding and protection considerations.
 - c. Where concerns are identified, the key principles of working with adults at risk embedded in the Care Act 2014, will always inform the NSNS's approach to interventions (see section 6 below).
 - d. Where a concern is identified, we must communicate very clearly what we have done and will be doing to safeguard the adult at risk, unless to do so would in any way increase risk to themselves or others. Capacity will be assumed unless there is reason to believe that the person cannot understand.
 - e. Concerns or allegations that NSNS's staff or volunteers have abused, or neglected adults will be taken very seriously and managed sensitively and fairly in accordance with these policies, relevant legislation, and local procedures.

9. We deliver this policy by:

- a. Providing effective leadership and management for employees and volunteers through induction, supervision/one-to-one learning and mentoring, support, and training.
- b. Ensuring effective and robust safeguarding and protection practices by having clear policies, procedures, practice standards and guidance in place.
- c. Enabling employees to exercise professional judgements based upon seeking to act in the best interests of, and outcomes for, the adult at risk.
- d. Safe recruitment and employment practices to ensure that robust recruitment, selection, induction, and supervision processes are in place for all those who work for and with NSNS.

Section 5. Capacity and Consent

- 10. It is important to be alert to issues of cognitive capacity which can increase the vulnerability of people where they have a reduced ability to make informed decisions in the moment. This may be transient (e.g., due to fear, shock, injury, illness) or long term (e.g., due to learning differences, disability, mental health issues).
- 11. Whilst this is a complex issue, it should not get in the way of staff and volunteers genuinely seeking to ensure that all individuals are respectfully consulted in relation to participation in activities and/or sharing of information about them.
- 12. Capacity to consent is not simply based on age and particularly where learning and communication difficulties and disabilities are identified. You should also consider a person's capacity to understand the consequences of giving or withholding their consent. They should not be treated as unable to decide until all practicable steps to help them have been taken.
- 13. When assessing a person's understanding you should seek to explain the issues using their preferred mode of communication and language. This should be done in a way that is suitable for them, considering all you know about them from your contact with them, particularly their age, language and likely understanding.
- 14. It is important to try and ensure that they really understand the issues and are not just agreeing to what is proposed. If you are unsure whether they have the capacity to consent, then you should seek advice from Masorti Judaism's designated Safeguarding Lead and DSL, Rabbi Roni Tabick - rabbi@nsnshul.org.uk. The person's friends, carer, another professional working with them or an advocate, where available, may be able to provide relevant information or advice where consulting these people does not increase potential risks.
- 15. The following criteria should be considered when assessing whether a person has sufficient understanding at any time to consent, or to refuse consent, to sharing of information about them or participating in specific activities:
 - a. Can the person understand the question being asked of them?
 - b. Are they taking an active part in the discussion?
 - c. Can they rephrase the question in their own words?
 - d. How would they explain it to someone else?

- e. Do they have a reasonable understanding of what the risks or benefits of giving their consent or saying no?
- f. What do they say they think would happen if they agree the action being suggested?
- g. Can they appreciate and consider the alternatives, weighing up one aspect against another and express a clear and consistent personal view? Encourage them to say out loud, or write down, their view of the pros and cons. You could recheck these views later or at a later contact with them

Section 6: Procedure for responding to allegations of abuse

- 16. If you are concerned that a crime has been committed or that there is an immediate concern about the safety of any adults at risk, call the police on 999 for an emergency response, or 101 for a non-emergency response.
 - 17. It is not always appropriate to call the Police, particularly in the cases of domestic abuse. Contacting the Police on someone else's behalf or without their knowledge/ consent, must be done with caution and care. Always liaise with the DSLs or their deputies before contacting the Police, unless you are in a position of immediate danger
 - 18. If the suspicions implicate the DSL/s, contact the police or the relevant statutory authorities listed below.
 - 19. Under no circumstances should a NSNS employee, volunteer, or member carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Those concerned that abuse may be taking place must follow the procedures set out below:
 - a. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse must write down in pen all information gathered relating to the concern.
 - b. All concerns must then be reported as soon as possible to the Masorti Judaism's designated Safeguarding lead who will deal with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter to the relevant statutory authorities along with a written record if deemed necessary.
- Hackney - Hackney Adult
Protection Services
Tel: 020 8356 5782 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) or
email: adultprotection@hackney.gov.uk
- c. The DSL may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern. However, the individual reporting the suspicions should not discuss the matter with anyone other than the DSL nominated above.
 - d. Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the DSL, in their absence there should not be a delay in referring to the relevant Social Services and/or the police. Reports can also be made to Noam and Masorti contacts, DSL Rabbi Zagoria-Moffet

(rabbiadam@masorti.org.uk) and Director of Noam, Reuben Green (reuben@masorti.org.uk), who accept that any information they may have will be shared in a strictly limited, need-to-know basis.

It is of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to Social Services, although Masorti Judaism hopes that all those employed, contracted, or volunteering on behalf of Masorti Judaism will use this procedure. If, however the individual with the concern feels that the DSL has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the DSL as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency directly.