



East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Statement

About

This document is to be read in conjunction with the NFCC Safeguarding Guidance for Children, Young People and Adults and the Safeguarding Fire Standards.

The Service's Safeguarding children and adults manual note outlines the procedures to be followed by East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS) staff and volunteers in dealing with safeguarding.

A Vulnerable Adult is defined as someone aged 18 or over who is, or may be, in need of community services due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability. Who is, or may be, unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

A Child is defined as any person aged under 18 years

Safeguarding Statement

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) recognises the protection and safety of children and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility.

ESFRS has developed a comprehensive safeguarding policy for all staff and volunteers which is subject to annual review. ESFRS safeguarding processes are scrutinised through the Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Boards' audits, in addition to the self-assessment process for the National Fire Chief's Council and the Fire Standards Board. Mandatory annual safeguarding training raises awareness of the ways in which children and vulnerable adults may be abused and/or harmed and provides guidance on the 'Safety and Welfare Guidelines', the Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults procedures, and the roles and responsibilities of our staff and volunteers in relation to the protection of children and vulnerable adults with whom they come into contact through their activities.

The policy endeavours to be consistent with the Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures and Sussex Safeguarding Policy and Procedures guidelines.

It is the responsibility of every manager within ESFRS to ensure that all staff and volunteers for whom they are responsible are aware of and understand the importance of the policy and the related documents. They must also make sure that any contractors, agents or other representatives engaged to undertake duties on their behalf which may involve them in contact with children and vulnerable adults, understand and comply with them, as appropriate.

An important element of good practice begins with the recruitment, selection, transfer and posting of staff to positions involving activities (as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act) that afford access to children and vulnerable adults. This includes carrying out appropriate statutory checks and taking references, which refer to the candidate's suitability to have access to children and vulnerable adults. The requirements of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act will be observed throughout by ESFRS in carrying out this process. ESFRS complies with the NFCC Safer Recruiting principles and recruiting staff have received safer recruiting training.

In some posts that involve activities affording regular access to children and vulnerable adults, for example our Youth Engagement personnel will be required to undergo appropriate checks to ensure their suitability for work involving regular access to children and vulnerable adults. Checks will also be required for volunteers acting on behalf of ESFRS. All personal information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality in line with the ESFRS normal procedures.

An important element of good practise begins with the recruitment, selection, transfer and posting of staff to positions affording substantial access to children.

This includes carrying out appropriate statutory checks and taking references, which refer to the candidate's suitability to have substantial access to children.

The requirement of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act will be observed throughout by ESFRS in carrying out this process.

No employee will be disadvantaged for not accepting or undertaking a specific task or post affording substantial access to children. It is recognised that some individuals may not wish to undertake this particular area of activity.

In posts that involve substantial access to children, personnel will be required to undergo a mandatory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (eDBS) to ensure their suitability for work involving substantial access to children. Checks will also be required for volunteers acting on behalf of EFRS.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for reviewing all activities involving substantial access at regular intervals and will also undergo an eDBS check.

Substantial access to children can be simplified as situations where an individual has regular contact over a period of time with the same child or young person during an activity or series of activities, e.g. Juvenile Fire Wise scheme, Fire Cadets and Watch Out schemes.

All activities that involve working with children will be designed to eliminate unnecessary substantial access to children, or risk to the member of staff of false or malicious claims

It is not expected that staff will act as children and vulnerable adults' protection workers or that they will be trained to intervene in cases of suspected abuse and/or harm. We will, however, maintain one member of staff with some expertise in safeguarding adults and children working within Prevention.

It is expected that all staff will always act on any suspected or potential case of abuse and/or harm. In such instances it must be reported directly and without delay, using the safeguarding children and vulnerable adults' procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Children and Adults manual note. ESFRS ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and receive appropriate supervision, support, advice in addition to the annual mandatory training.

The management of ESFRS will support anyone who, in good faith, reports their concerns that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused and/or harmed, or is at risk of abuse and/or harm, even if those concerns prove to be unfounded.

Revision History

Release Number	Date	Revision Description	Owner
Version 1	19/8/24	Initial document	DK