

ACHATES

Safeguarding Policy

Achates employees and freelancers are committed to practice which, above all, protects adults at risk and children and young people (those aged under 18 years) from harm. It is the duty of all our staff & freelancers to protect each child or adult at risk from abuse and to be alert to the possibility of abuse.

Note: In this document reference to Achates includes any of its activities or services provided.

Achates

- is committed to creating a safe environment where adults at risk, children and young people can enjoy rewarding and stimulating experiences;
- recognises that adults at risk, children and young persons should be listened to and heard, valued and respected as individuals, respected for their identity and uniqueness, encouraged and praised, and involved in decisions as appropriate – age, regardless of gender, ethnicity, social class, disability, sexual identity, language or religious beliefs;
- takes any suspicion, disclosure or allegation of abuse very seriously, and the company Safeguarding Policy, sets out the supportive, confidential and professional nature of how suspicion, disclosure or allegations of abuse are dealt with, both internally within the company and with regards to appropriate statutory authorities;
- believes that the value of a Safeguarding Policy lies not merely in its intention but in its practical delivery.

The Directors nominate the Chief Operating Officer as the Designated Safeguarding Officer for the Company with day to day responsibility for ensuring that this policy is put into practice. The policy is monitored and reviewed regularly

It is the responsibility of the Chief Operating Officer to monitor effectiveness, develop where necessary the Safeguarding Policy and its Code of Practice, and report to the Directors. Each member of the company has responsibility for their own compliance.

It is therefore important that staff members are aware of, and confident in using, Achates' code of practice as detailed in the below policies.

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achates.org.uk

Achates Philanthropy Limited is a company limited by guarantee in England, no 08970512.

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Child Protection Policy

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 ([The Children Act 1989](#)). A young person is in the upper ranges of the official definition of a child. The term has no legal status; it is an acknowledgement that some older children do not see themselves as 'children'. Achates will ensure all activity with children and young people are run in-line with this policy.

Policy Principles

1. The welfare of a child or young person will always be paramount;
2. The welfare of families will be promoted;
3. The rights, wishes, and feelings of children, young people and their families will be respected and listened to;
4. Those people in positions of responsibility within Achates will work in accordance with the interests of children and young people and will follow the policy outlined below;
5. Those people in positions of responsibility within the organisation will ensure that the same opportunities are available to everyone and that all differences between individuals will be treated with respect.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

1. Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and freelancers;
2. Creating an open and honest culture where young people and adults feel comfortable sharing their concerns with leadership team;
3. Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and freelancers;
4. Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately;
5. Following carefully the procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff and freelancers.

Staff Protection

1. No alcohol or illegal drugs may be consumed by people with responsibility for supervising children and young people throughout their contact time, at any point on, that same day, prior to and for one hour after the session;
2. All employees and workers are entitled to feel that they are not being put into any situation where they could be at danger of mistaken accusations;
3. All employees and workers must work to the Code of Behaviour when working with children and young people as part of their role;
4. If you ever feel that you are in danger or under threat contact a member of staff immediately and take yourself out of the situation;
5. If any child, young person or parent/guardian makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff or of a worker or volunteer, the person receiving the complaint

- must report it immediately to their line manager and the Safeguarding Officer;
6. Any member of staff who has reason to suspect that a colleague may have abused a child or young person must immediately report concerns to their line manager and the Safeguarding Officer;
 7. A record must be made of these concerns, noting any witnesses to the incident/allegation.

Our policy and good practice will be reviewed annually.

i. Code of Behaviour

Statement of Intent: it is the policy of Achates to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional, and sexual harm. Achates is committed to creating a safe environment in which young people can feel comfortable and secure whilst engaged in any of Achates's activities. Staff and freelancers should at all times show respect and understanding for individuals' rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of Achates.

a. Guidelines for Staff and freelancers

Attitudes and Values

Achates staff and freelancers should be committed to:

- Treating children and young people with respect and dignity;
- Always listening to what a child or young person is saying;
- Valuing each child and young person;
- Recognising the unique contribution each individual can make;
- Encouraging and praising each child or young person.

Leading by Example

Achates staff and freelancers should endeavour to:

- Provide an example, which we would wish others to follow;
- Use appropriate language with children and young people and challenge any inappropriate language used by a child or young person or an adult working with young people;
- Respect a child and young person's right to privacy.

One to One Contact

- Achates staff and freelancers should never be alone with a child;
- If a private conversation is necessary, ask for another DBS-checked adult to be present, or conduct the conversation in an open area in sight of other Achates staff and freelancers;
- Always find another member of staff if you are helping a lost child or young person;
- Achates should follow the NSPCC guideline of a ratio of at least 1 adult to 10 children during all activities.

Physical contact

Achates staff and freelancers should never:

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games;
- Do things of a personal nature for a child or young person that they can do for themselves. If such an incident arises, for example where a child or young person has limited mobility, Achates staff and freelancers should seek a member of school/ partner organisation staff to deal with such an incident;
- Allow, or engage in, inappropriate touching of any kind.
- If brief physical contact is necessary, always ask the child if they consent to this and ensure physical contact is a last resort.

Photography, Social Media and Communication Technology

- Never use photos of children or young people on our website without ensuring relevant permissions are in place;
- Never take pictures of children or young people with a camera, phone or camcorder, unless you have written consent from their parent/guardian;
- Achates staff and freelancers must never make contact with young people past or present aged under 18 years old using their personal social media profiles (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram);
- Achates staff and freelancers must never share their personal phone number or email address with young people engaged on client programmes aged under 18 years old;
- Achates may use official Achates social media profiles and emails to formally share course information and interact with Achates client programme participants regarding official Achates activities; however, these interactions should be monitored by other members of Achates staff team to ensure accountability.

General

Achates staff and freelancers should:

- Be aware that someone might misinterpret their actions no matter how well intentioned;
- Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts;
- Never allow themselves to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking situations such as tantrums or crushes;
- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues, or make suggestive remarks, or gestures about or to a child or young person.

ii. Immediate Action to Ensure Safety

- Immediate action may be necessary at any stage in involvement with children and families;
- In all cases it is vital to take whatever action is needed to safeguard the child or young person;

- If a child or young person has an accident, refer to a First Aider on site and report in the Accident Book;
- If emergency medical attention is required this can be secured by calling an ambulance (dial 999) or by taking a child to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department;
- If a child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted (dial 999) as they alone have the power to remove a child immediately if protection is necessary, via the Police Protection Order.

iii. Recognition of Abuse or Neglect

Abuse or neglect of a child or young person is caused by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them, or by a stranger. Children can be abused by other young people as well as adults.

- Physical abuse: may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after;
- Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child though it may occur alone;
- Sexual abuse: forcing or enticing a young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. This may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways;
- Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs;

iv. Awareness and Response

Achates staff and freelancers need to be alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and also from other sources including abuse by other Achates staff and freelancers. Achates should know how to recognise and act upon indicators

of abuse or potential abuse involving children. There is an expected responsibility for all members of Achates to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures. It is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns. However, staff members and freelancers must not discuss their concerns with parents/carers in the following circumstances:

- Where sexual abuse is suspected;
- Where organised or multiple abuse is suspected;
- Where fictitious illness by proxy (also known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected;
- Where contacting parents/carers would place a child, staff members, freelancers or freelancers, or any others at immediate risk.
- What to do if children talk to staff and freelancers about abuse or neglect:
- It is recognised that a child may seek out staff members and freelancers to share information about abuse or neglect or talk spontaneously individually or in groups when they are present. Equally, it is good practice to ask a child why they are upset or how a cut or bruise was caused or respond to a child wanting to talk. This practice can help clarify vague concerns and result in appropriate action.

What to do in this situation:

- Listen carefully to the child. Do not ask direct or leading questions;
- Explain that they cannot promise not to speak to others about the information the child has shared;
- Give the child time and attention. Do not make notes while the child is talking;
- Allow the child to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events;
- Explain that they need to share the information to help keep the child safe;
- Reassure the child:
 - That they have done the right thing by sharing the information;
 - That they have not done anything wrong;
 - What will happen next.
- Do not ask the child to repeat her or his account of events to anyone;
- Immediately after the conversation write down an accurate record of the information you have been given. Always write down the timing, setting, people present, child's presentation (i.e. appearance, behaviour and emotional state), what was said - as close as possible to verbatim and using the child's own words. Do not paraphrase;
- Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence;

The same recording process should be followed if a staff member or volunteer has any other reason to suspect a safeguarding concern.

v. Consulting About Concerns

As soon as possible, and within 12 hours of the disclosure or recognition of concern, the incident should be reported to the staff member with the group and or one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers and complete an Incident Form as appropriate. The purpose of consultation is to discuss concerns in relation to a child and decide what action is necessary. The Designated Safeguarding Officer is:
Cerian Eiles

If this person is implicated in the concerns, these concerns should be discussed directly with Social Services, or with the NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000. To find contact details for the local authorities in which Achates activities take place, please go to: <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>.

Achates staff members and freelancers should consult externally with the local Social Services Department in the following circumstances:

- When there is an inability to consult promptly or at all with the staff member of the group or the Designated Safeguarding Officer;
- When there is uncertainty after internal consultation as to whether child protection concerns exist;
- When there is disagreement as to whether child protection concerns exist;
- When the concerns relate to any member of the organising committee.
- Consultation is not the same as making a referral but should enable a decision to be made as to whether a referral to Social Services or the police should progress. Regardless of the outcome, the statement of Safeguarding or Child Protection concern will be kept in a password-protected folder for 10 years following the incident.

vi. Making a Referral

A referral involves giving Social Services or the Police information about concerns relating to an individual or family in order that enquiries can be undertaken by the appropriate agency followed by any necessary action. In certain cases, the level of concern will lead straight to a referral without external consultation being necessary. Parents / carers should be informed if a referral is being made except in the circumstances outlined in section 3. The inability to inform parents, however, should not prevent a referral being made. It would then become a joint decision with Social Services about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom.

For initial advice, refer to the social care services where the event is taking place. The appropriate phone number can be found by typing in the postcode of Achates activity location: <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>. To discuss any safeguarding concern, call the NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000.

Information Required

As much of the following information as possible should be given. The unavailability of some information should not prevent a referral being made.

The name, telephone number, and position of the staff member, freelancer or volunteer making the referral.

- Full name and address of the child or young person, and their age and date of birth;
- Names and address of parents/carers, and their telephone numbers;
- Details of the child's gender, ethnicity, first language, and any special needs;
- The names of professionals known to be involved with the child and/or family e.g. GP, Health Visitor, School;
- The nature of the concern; and foundation for them (including dates and times of any specific incidents);
- Whether the child or young person has been spoken to and, if so, what was said;
- An opinion on whether the child may need urgent action to make them safe;
- A view on what appears to be the needs of the child or the family;
- Whether the consent of a parent/carer has been given to the referral being made;
- Whether this information has been passed on to anyone, and if anyone else has been consulted.

Post-referral Action

Following a referral, Achates staff members and freelancers must:

- Ensure that an accurate record of the concern(s) made at the time is kept;
- Put the concerns in writing to Social Services within 24 hours;
- Record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken, and the reasons for this decision.

vii. Confidentiality

- Referrals: Achates should ensure that any records made in relation to a referral should be kept confidential and in a secure place. Information in relation to child protection concerns should be shared on a "need to know" basis. However, the sharing of information is vital to child protection and therefore the issue of confidentiality is secondary to a child's need for protection;
- Children and young people: have a right to information, especially any information that could increase their safety. When sharing information, Achates staff members and freelancers should be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility, of the child or young person with whom they are sharing;
- Other bodies: a copy of Achates Safeguarding Policy will be made available to any other appropriate body.

Adult at Risk Policy

Definitions

Adults at risk are people over 18, who are in need of care and unable to protect

themselves because of:

- a mental or learning disability.
- a physical disability.
- age or illness.
- Inability to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'.
(*Definition from 'No Secrets' March 2000 Department of Health*)
It may also include victims of domestic abuse, hate crime and anti-social abuse.

People who abuse are:

- often well known to their victims but can be strangers.
- might be a relative, partner, son or daughter, friend or neighbour, a paid or voluntary worker, or a health or social care worker.
- could be another adults at risk or service user.
- may not realise they are abusing and can sometimes act out of character and abuse because of the stress of caring.

Abuse can take place in a wide range of settings such as:

- The adults at risk's own home.
- A carer's home.
- A day centre.
- A care home.
- A hospital.
- The workplace.
- Educational institutions.

Recognition

The most common types of abuse are:

- *Physical abuse*: this is usually the use of force to cause pain and injury and signs might include:
 - A history of unexplained falls or minor injuries
 - Bruising in well protected areas, or clustered from repeated striking or Finger marks
 - Burns of unusual location or type
 - Injuries found at different states of healing
 - Injury shape similar to an object
 - Injuries to head/face/scalp
 - History of GP or agency hopping, or reluctance to seek help or Accounts which vary with time or are inconsistent with physical evidence or Weight loss due to malnutrition, or rapid weight gain
 - Ulcers, bed sores and being left in wet clothing
 - Drowsiness due to too much medication, or lack of medication causing recurring crises/ hospital admissions

Also included is misuse of medication or forcing someone, for example, to stay in a care home against their wishes.

- *Neglect*: this is when an adult at risk does not have their basic needs met, such as adequate food or warmth or help with personal hygiene. Signs might include deteriorating health, appearance or mood.
- *Financial abuse*: this is when an adult at risk is exploited for financial gain. • Often valuables will go missing in the home or there may be a change in financial circumstances that cannot be explained.
- *Sexual abuse*: this includes:
 - Disclosure or partial disclosure (use of phrases such as 'It's a secret') o Medical problems, e.g. Genital infections, pregnancy, difficulty walking or o sitting
 - Disturbed behaviour e.g. depression, sudden withdrawal from activities, or Loss of previous skills, sleeplessness or nightmares, self-injury,
 - Showing fear or aggression to one particular person, repeated or excessive masturbation, inappropriately seductive behaviour,
 - Loss of appetite or difficulty in keeping food down.
 - Behaviour of others towards the adults at risk
 - Circumstances – e.g. two service users found in a toilet area, one in a distressed state
- *Psychological abuse*: this might be emotional abuse such as threats of harm or abandonment, enforced isolation, blaming or controlling behaviour, or verbal and racial insults. Signs may be fear, confusion or disturbed sleep.
- *Discriminatory abuse*: this includes any sort of abuse based on an adult at risk's race, gender or impairment such as their mental or physical health. • *Institutional abuse*: this is poor professional practice, including neglect, and can take the form of isolated incidents right through to ill treatment or gross misconduct.

Action to be taken

- It is responsibility of all staff & volunteers to report abuse.
- If the adult at risk is in danger, first ensure they are safe and if immediate help is needed, call the emergency services on 999.
- Then follow the detailed reporting procedure set out below.
- A worker from Merton Social Services may then arrange an investigation that involves other agencies who work with adults at risk.
- Action will then be taken to ensure the adults at risk is protected in the future.
- Staff & volunteers who abuse will be dealt with through Achatas' disciplinary procedures.
- Where a criminal offence has been committed the police will always be informed.

Reporting procedures for cases of alleged/suspected abuse

- Only ask the person sufficient questions to establish what has happened i.e. accident or possible abuse.
- If danger exists, ensure the person and any other adults at risk are protected.
- If the person is seriously injured seek immediate medical treatment – ringing 999 for ambulance and police if the injuries are serious.
- Immediately report the incident to your line manager and adhere to existing policies e.g. Health and Safety. Your line manager should decide if Social Services or National Care Standards Commission need to be informed, if the victim's relatives need to be contacted, and if the police should be informed.
- Outside of office hours, cases of suspected abuse should be reported to the emergency out of hours duty social worker, except mental health cases, which should be reported through the existing duty senior nurse.
- Be careful not to destroy or contaminate evidence.
- As soon as possible detailed notes should be made. Documentation is vital and if evidence might be required for criminal proceedings at a later date, a medical examination by a GP/hospital doctor or nurse would be advantageous.
- If the suspected abuser is a member of staff, the matter will be dealt with through Achates's disciplinary procedure. The police could be involved and s/he could be suspended pending an investigation.

Confidentiality

Our adults at risk have the right to expect that all staff and volunteers will deal sensitively and sympathetically with their situation. It is important that information remains confidential and that only those with a 'need to know' should be privy to it.

Use of images and data

Achates recognises that consideration needs to be given to who might have access to any images in whatever media and who gives permission for their use. Achates endeavours to safeguard the rights of adults at risk in images by:

- always seeking written consent from the adults at risk BEFORE taking photographs;
- never using photos of adults at risk on our website without ensuring relevant permissions are in place;
- always being clear about how the image will be used and for how long;
- being careful when naming a adults at risk and never using the person's full name or the place where they live in conjunction with a photograph.
- never publishing any images that could be used inappropriately;
- ensuring consent forms and images are stored safely and securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Use of social media

Achates recognises that social media provides opportunities to engage, connect and develop unique relationships with adults at risk in a creative and dynamic medium, where users are active participants, such as social networking sites e.g. Facebook, and other current platforms; micro-blogging services e.g. Twitter; video-sharing services e.g. YouTube; and photo-sharing services e.g. Flickr or Instagram. However, Achates also recognises the risks associated with user interactive services.

Achates will:

- ensure that any Achates webpage/profile created specifically for a social media site adheres to this policy's guidelines relating to the privacy of personal information and the use of images;
- monitor the use of such sites, and comments made on the sites, to ensure that they are appropriate and not abusive;
- ensure that there is a dedicated manager of social media responsible for setting up, managing and moderating (overseeing / reviewing /responding to posted content) such sites. Achates will ensure that this person is trained in and understands online safeguarding issues, including warning signs of grooming and sexual exploitation and that they have a DBS check; and ensure compliance with Achates's policy on social media as detailed in this document.
- not ask users to divulge any personal details – including home and email addresses, schools or mobile numbers – that may help locate a child, young person or adults at risk;
- promote safe and responsible use of social networking

Use of Data

Achates recognises that the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 must be adhered to when handling the personal information of adults at risk. This means that personal information must be obtained and processed fairly and lawfully and kept securely; only disclosed in appropriate circumstances; and not held for longer than necessary.

It is best practice to gain verbal or written consent, from a adults at risk before any personal information relating to them is shared with another organisation. However, you may not need to seek consent to share information if it might be unsafe to seek (e.g. seeking consent might increase the risk to the adults at risk) or causes an unjustified delay or if it would prejudice the prevention, detection or Procedure for documenting suspicions or allegations of abuse.

All adults at risk protection concerns must be recorded accurately and immediately using clear and simple language. Staff must record information as soon as possible and all records must be signed, dated and timed. Records should an account of factual information and any view or judgement expressed about these facts should be clearly

qualified as such. All records should be kept securely and regarded as highly sensitive material. Please refer to the company's Data Protection Policy for details.

Safe Recruitment Procedures

Achates's recruitment policy stipulates that all staff (paid or voluntary) will have to submit a CV or complete an application form, detailing past work history and references. Individuals are then interviewed and references requested. Only on receipt of satisfactory references will a formal offer of employment or placement be made.

All staff and volunteers working directly with adults at risk are required to have an enhanced check through the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) before commencement of work or placement.

Copies of all returned DBS checks and documentation pertaining to any adult at risk issues will be kept confidentially and securely

Staff can undergo training and induction whilst waiting for the checks to clear, but cannot undertake any unsupervised face-to-face work until satisfactory checks have been received.

Safe Operational Procedures

Achates has a comprehensive series of policies and procedures which outline the expected standards of behaviour and codes of conduct for all those employed or providing services to the company. These policies are presented alongside the contract, within the staff handbook and signed accordingly as part of their agreement with Achates. It is a condition of employment that they adhere to these policies and procedures.

Safeguarding sample disclosure form

Your name:
Project Name and Your Position:
Child/Adult at risk's Name:
Child/Adult at risk's Address:

Parents/Carers Name and Address:	
Child/Adult at risk's Date of Birth:	
Date and Time of Incident:	
Your Observations:	
Exactly What Child/Adult at risk Said and What You Said: (remember not to lead the child, record actual details. Continue of separate sheet if necessary)	
Action Taken So Far:	
External Agencies Contacted (Date & Time)	
POLICE Yes/No	If yes – which: Name and Contact number: Details of Advice Received: