



FINCHLEY PROGRESSIVE SYNAGOGUE

Adult Safeguarding Policy

Date of policy update	January 2026
Date for next review	January 2027
Trustee Safeguarding Lead	Dan Epstein
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Rabbi Rebecca Birk

Contact Information:

Emergency Services: 999
Barnet Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub: 020 8359 4066
Emergency Duty Team: 020 8359 2000

1. PURPOSE, ETHOS AND SCOPE

Finchley Progressive Synagogue (FPS) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, dignity and human rights of all adults within its community. Safeguarding is a whole-community responsibility and will be integral to synagogue life, its governance and culture.

This policy applies to all adults aged 18 and over who participate in FPS activities, services, groups or events, including members, visitors, staff, volunteers and contractors.

This policy should be read alongside the FPS Child Safeguarding Policy and reflects the same ethos, language and expectations, while addressing adult-specific responsibilities.

We take great pride in positively promoting fundamental British values. We will act to prevent extremism.

Everyone is advised to maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' with regard to safeguarding.

2. SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

FPS adopts the six safeguarding principles outlined in the Care Act 2014 will apply them consistently across both adult and child safeguarding:

- Empowerment – supporting adults to make informed choices
- Prevention – acting early to reduce risk
- Proportionality – responses appropriate to the level of risk
- Protection – support for those most at risk
- Partnership – working with statutory and community agencies
- Accountability – transparency and governance oversight

3. LEGAL AND STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

This policy is informed by UK legislation and guidance including:

- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Online Safety Act 2023
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- Protect Duty (Martyn's Law – forthcoming 2026)

As a place of worship and community venue, FPS recognizes its responsibility to take proportionate steps to protect adults from abuse, neglect, exploitation, online harm and public safety risks.

4. DEFINITIONS

An Adult at Risk is a person aged 18 or over who:

- has care and support needs, and
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- is unable to protect themselves due to those needs.

Vulnerability may be long-term or temporary and may arise from illness, disability, mental health needs, bereavement, trauma, social isolation, financial hardship or major life changes.

5. TYPES OF ABUSE

Abuse is the misuse of power or control that causes harm or distress. Abuse may be a single act or a pattern of behaviour.

Types of abuse include:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse or exploitation
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse (including scams)
- Domestic abuse and coercive control
- Discriminatory or hate-related abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Neglect or acts of omission – physical care or medical needs, including nutrition, providing a safe warm environment
- Self-neglect
- Modern slavery
- Online and digital abuse

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Synagogue Council:

- Holds overall responsibility for safeguarding
- Approves and reviews safeguarding policies annually
- Appoints a Safeguarding Trustee and DSL (Adults)
- Ensures safer recruitment and training arrangements

Safeguarding Trustee:

- Provides oversight and assurance
- Monitors safeguarding practice
- Reports annually to Council

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Adults):

- Receives and responds to safeguarding concerns
- Assesses risk and mental capacity

- Makes referrals to statutory agencies
- Maintains secure safeguarding records
- Provides advice and support to staff and volunteers

Staff, Volunteers and Congregants:

- Remain alert to safeguarding concerns
- Act promptly and report concerns
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Follow FPS safeguarding policies

7. RECOGNISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Concerns may arise through:

- Direct disclosure
- Behavioural or emotional changes
- Signs of financial exploitation
- Social withdrawal or isolation
- Online harm or coercion

Abuse can occur in family, community, institutional or online settings.

Safeguarding issues can happen anywhere, including in our own community at FPS.

8. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

If there is immediate danger:

- Call 999
- Inform the DSL as soon as possible

When responding to a concern:

- Listen calmly and respectfully
- Reassure without making promises
- Do not investigate
- Record and report promptly

FPS' role is to recognize, respond and refer, not to investigate.

9. MENTAL CAPACITY AND CONSENT

Where an adult has capacity for that particular issue, their wishes will be respected unless others are at risk of harm. Capacity is decision specific.

If an adult with capacity refuses intervention, their wishes will be respected unless there is:

- a public interest concern where not acting will put other adults or children at risk
- a duty of care to intervene, for example where a crime has been or may be committed. In these circumstances immediate action must be taken to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those adults at risk.

- In all circumstances a carer/appointee should only be involved where an Adult at Risk lacks capacity.

Capacity is assessed through a two-stage functional test, asking:

1. Is there an impairment of or disturbance in the functioning of a person's mind or brain? If so,
2. Is the impairment or disturbance sufficient that the person lacks the capacity to make a particular decision?

A person is unable to make their own decision if they cannot do one or more of the following four tasks:

1. understand information given to them,
2. retain that information long enough to be able to make the decision,
3. weigh up the information available to make the decision,
4. communicate their decision – this could be by talking, using sign language or even simple muscle movements such as blinking an eye or squeezing a hand

10. SAFER WORKING PRACTICE

FPS expects:

- Clear professional boundaries
- Appropriate supervision
- Safe digital communication, in all online activities
- Adherence to the FPS Code of Conduct

11. SAFER RECRUITMENT AND DBS

FPS is committed to safer recruitment:

- Roles will be assessed for safeguarding risk
- Clear role descriptions provided to all staff
- References will be obtained
- Appropriate DBS checks undertaken
- Induction includes safeguarding training
- Ongoing supervision and support

A safer recruitment policy will be in place.

12. VOLUNTEERS

No volunteer will be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity until the necessary checks have been obtained. An enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check will be obtained for all new volunteers in regulated activity that will regularly teach or look after adults on an unsupervised basis

The synagogue will ensure that any contractor or employee of the contractor working on the premises while Vulnerable Adults are on site has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check.

Contractors without a DBS check will be supervised if they will have contact with children. The identity of the contractor will be checked upon their arrival at the synagogue.

All allegations must be reported immediately to the DSL or Synagogue Chair. FPS will liaise with statutory agencies and follow their guidance.

13. ACTIVITY WHICH SHOULD NEVER BE SANCTIONED

Staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors and congregants must never:

- Engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games.
- Sharing a room at night alone with an adult at risk.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to an adult at risk.
- Allow allegations made by an adult at risk to go unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Invite or allow adults at risk to stay over with you at your home unsupervised.
- Give out your personal details, without seeking further guidance

If a representative suspects that an adult at risk may be a victim of abuse, they must immediately inform a senior or trustee.

14. If you receive a disclosure of abuse:

- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief
- Allow the Adult at Risk to say what has happened, without interruption and show that you are listening through body language
- Reassure the Adult at Risk but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Inform the adult at risk that will not get them in trouble, and that they were right to talk about it.
- Do not promise confidentiality as it might be necessary to refer to the police and/or adult social care
- Report the disclosure immediately to a safeguarding team member
- If you suspect an immediate danger to oneself or others or an imminent crime, you should call 999 directly without delay

15. INFORMATION SHARING AND RECORD KEEPING

Safeguarding information is shared on a need-to-know basis.
Records will be made, and stored securely in line with GDPR.
Body maps can be used to document injuries (see child safeguarding policy)

16. FORCED MARRIAGE

For the purpose of this policy, a “forced marriage” is defined as a marriage that is entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties, and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into the marriage. Forced marriage is classed as a crime in the UK.

17. PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

Photographs and video that are for use outside of the synagogue (on our website or in the LJ magazine) should be anonymous unless specific permission has been given.

18. EXTREMISM

Extremism is defined in the UK as the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Under the government’s Prevent duty, which forms part of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, organisations have a responsibility to help safeguard adults from being drawn into extremism or radicalisation. Within the synagogue, this includes remaining alert to signs that an adult may be vulnerable to extremist influences, whether linked to political, religious, or ideological causes, and responding appropriately. Any concerns should be shared promptly with the synagogue’s Safeguarding Lead and, where necessary, referred through local safeguarding or Prevent channels, always with sensitivity, proportionality, and respect for individual rights and community cohesion.

18. TRAINING AND REVIEW

- Safeguarding training will be mandatory for all staff and volunteers
- Trustee and DSL refresher training every two years (minimum)
- Annual policy review by Council