



**Music Relief Foundation**  
**Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**  
*Safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone*

Organisation	MRF
Scope of policy	Applies to all staff and volunteers and all services, activities, training and general running of the organisation.
Policy operational date	01/15/2019; approved by the Board of Trustees
Policy prepared by	Olga Shaumyan (Administrator)
Reviewed/Amended	05/04/2021
Review date	05/04/2022 (every year or sooner if required)
Distributing	This policy will be available on the MRF website and staff shared drive. It will be a requirement for all trustees and staff to read the policy after appointment or after its review. A summary of all relevant policies will be included in the volunteer handbook with clear signposting to the full text. Volunteers will be kept up to date with any changes that might affect their role.

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## Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy statement

### PURPOSE & SCOPE

The purpose and scope of the MRF Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy is to lay down a safeguarding practice for the services delivered by MRF in order to:

- to protect children and young people who receive MRF’s services from harm (this includes the children of adults who use our services);
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of MRF, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, session workers, agency staff and students.

### LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seek to protect children in England: the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, and the child-centred guidance *Working together to safeguard children* (1918) from the Department for Education.

Keeping children safe from significant harm is the responsibility of all adults especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the



monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the local Croydon Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB), which is the partnership of several agencies who work with children and families across the borough. MRF is committed to respond in accordance with London Child Protection Procedures followed by CSCB and partner agencies in all cases where there is a concern about significant harm.

### **OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES**

We believe that:

- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.
- The welfare of a child or young person will always be paramount.
- The rights, wishes and feelings of children and young people will be respected and listened to.
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take;
- all children, 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 children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues;
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them;
- appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people, a deputy and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding;
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently;
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;

- recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance;
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions;
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- The MRF Safeguarding policy will be implemented through a package of safeguarding procedures and practices:

## **IMPLEMENTATION POINTS**

### **Policy**

There is a policy that describes how it is committed to preventing and responding appropriately to harm to children. MRF's Safeguarding & Child Protection policy makes it clear to everyone that children must be safeguarded and not put at risk of harm because of our contact with, or impact on, children.

- Our Safeguarding Policy reflects the rights of children to protection from abuse and exploitation as outlined in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- Our policy is approved by the MRF Board of Trustees and applies to all our staff and associates.
- The policy is publicised in an appropriate manner, promoted and distributed widely: the text is available on the MRF web site, from our office and is included in a short form in the Volunteer/Staff Handbook.
- Managers have specific responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the policy.

### **People**

MRF places clear responsibilities and expectations on its staff and associates and supports them to understand and act in line with MRF's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy. Everyone connected MRF should know how to keep children safe and have appropriate learning opportunities to develop and maintain the necessary attitudes, skills and knowledge to keep children safe. Partners, including implementing partners, funding partners or those organisations that contribute to business operations, should have child safeguarding measures, which are consistent with the MRF policy. Children and families should understand our commitments to child safeguarding and what to do if concerns arise.

- Key staff are designated at different levels (including trustee level) as "focal points" with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
- There are written guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour of adults towards children and of children towards other children.



- There are guidelines for engaging partners, communities and children on child safeguarding.

### **Procedures**

MRF creates a child safe environment through implementing child safeguarding procedures that are applied across the organisation.

- MRF will take part in local mapping exercises which provide information on the legal, social welfare and child protection arrangements.
- Child safeguarding risk assessments and mitigation strategies are incorporated into existing risk assessment processes at all levels.
- Child safeguarding measures are integrated with existing processes and systems (strategic planning, budgeting, recruitment, programme cycle management, performance management, procurement, partner agreements and management systems etc.).
- A reporting and responding process for incidents and concerns is developed which is locally appropriate.

### **Accountability**

MRF monitors and reviews its safeguarding measures:

- Implementation of child safeguarding policies and procedures is regularly monitored.
- Progress, performance and lessons learnt are reported to key stakeholders (management forums and external or independent bodies where relevant) and included in MRF's annual reports.
- Learning from practical case experience informs policy review and changes to child safeguarding measures.
- Policies and practices are reviewed at regular intervals and may be referred for formal evaluation to an external evaluator/auditor.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

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

- MRF Health & Safety Policy
- MRF Policies for Young People
- MRF Youth Work Guidelines
- MRF Complaints & Compliments Policy
- Whistleblowing



**DESIGNATED LEADS & THEIR CONTACT DETAILS**

**Nominated safeguarding/child protection lead**

**Name:** Magdalene Adenaike

**Phone/email:** 020 3633 0560, magdalene@music-relief.org

**Deputy safeguarding/child protection lead**

**Name:** Olga Shaumyan

**Phone/email:** 020 3633 0560, office@music-relief.org

**Trustee/Senior lead for safeguarding and child protection**

**Name:** Jonathan Bob-Amara, Board Chair

**Phone/email:** 020 3633 0560, jonathan@music-relief.org

**REVIEW LOG**

Date	Name	Signature
05/04/2020	Olga Shaumyan	OS
05/04/2021	Olga Shaumyan	OS

## **Role description for the designated safeguarding officer**

### **PURPOSE OF THE ROLE**

- To take the lead in ensuring that appropriate arrangements for keeping children and young people safe whilst in care of MRF.
- To promote the safety and welfare of children and young people involved in MRF activities at all times.

### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Take a lead role in developing and reviewing MRF safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.
2. Take a lead role in implementing MRF safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures and ensuring that all safeguarding and child protection issues concerning children and young people who take part in MRF activities are responded to appropriately.
3. Make sure that everyone working or volunteering with or for children and young people at MRF, including the board of trustees/management, understands the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures and knows what to do if they have concerns about a child's welfare.
4. Make sure children and young people who are involved in MRF activities and their parents know who they can talk to if they have a welfare concern and understand what action the organisation will take in response.
5. Receive and record information from anyone who has concerns about a child who takes part in MRF activities.
6. Take the lead on responding to information that may constitute a child protection concern, including a concern that an adult involved with MRF may present a risk to children or young people. This includes:
  - o assessing and clarifying the information,
  - o making referrals to statutory organisations as appropriate,
  - o consulting with and informing the relevant members of the organisation's management,
  - o following the organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures.
7. Liaise with, pass on information to and receive information from statutory child protection agencies such as:
  - o local authority child protection services,
  - o the police.



- This includes making formal referrals to agencies when necessary.
8. Consult the NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) Helpline when support is needed, by calling 0808 800 5000 or emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).
  9. Store and retain child protection records according to legal requirements and the organisation's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures.
  10. Work closely with the management/board of trustees to ensure they are kept up to date with safeguarding issues and are fully informed of any concerns about organisational safeguarding and child protection practice.
  11. Report regularly to the management/board of trustees on issues relating to safeguarding and child protection, to ensure that child protection is seen as an ongoing priority issue and that safeguarding and child protection requirements are being followed at all levels of the organisation.
  12. Be familiar with and work within inter-agency child protection procedures developed by the local child protection agencies.
  13. Be familiar with issues relating to child protection and abuse, and keep up to date with new developments in this area.
  14. Attend regular training in issues relevant to child protection and share knowledge from that training with everyone who works or volunteers with or for children and young people at MRF.
  15. Attend team meetings, supervision sessions and management meetings as arranged.
  16. Work flexibly as may be required and carry out any other reasonable duties.

## **ROLE QUALIFICATIONS**

Appointment to this role is subject to satisfactory vetting and barring checks.

Child protection leads must have received relevant safeguarding and child protection training that is specific to their role. This training should be refreshed regularly and they should keep up to date with any changes in safeguarding and child protection legislation and guidance.

NSPCC has a wealth of advice on their site, such as:

- Training for nominated child protection leads: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/training/designated-lead-courses>
- Child abuse and neglect: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect>
- Recognising and responding to abuse: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/recognising-and-responding-to-abuse>



## **Safer recruitment**

All prospective MRF staff and volunteers with access to children will undergo a recruitment selection to ensure their suitability to work with children and young people. They will be expected to provide references and hold a current DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) certificate before starting work with MRF. All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable individuals are prevented from having any involvement with MRF.

### **ADVERTISEMENT**

Any advertisement will make clear MRF's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

### **JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION**

The job description will be the key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role.

The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The person specification will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children.

### **APPLICATION FORM**

The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children. The form will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected and possible referral to the police.

### **REFERENCES**

References will be sent for immediately after shortlisting an applicant. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, the reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any formal offer of employment being made. Two professional/character references must be provided. These will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and information to support appointment decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by phone or face-to-face will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.



MRF does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

### **RIGHT TO WORK IN THE UK AND CERTIFICATES**

All candidates will be asked to provide a proof of their identity (passport etc.) or evidence of their right to work in the UK, original proof of any professional qualifications they hold which are either required for the position. Copies will be taken and kept on file.

### **INTERVIEW**

There will be a face-to-face interview, and the same panel will see all the applicants for the vacant position. The interview questions will be consistent to all applicants but the panel may ask for points raised during the interview process and written applications to be expanded on. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria. Presentations and tasks may be part of the process but should be agreed in advance and common to all applicants

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process.

### **OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT**

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS Certificate or, for staff with access to children, Enhanced DBS certificate; references, medical checks (if applicable), copies of qualification and proof of identity. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

### **DEALING WITH CONVICTIONS**

Any disclosure that causes concern will be treated with due vigilance and decision will be made following a risk assessment. MRF operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- how long ago the offence occurred;
- whether it's a one-off or history of offences;
- whether there were changes in circumstances;
- evidence of decriminalisation and remorse.

A formal face to face meeting will take place with the lead safeguarding officer and a member from the management to establish the facts and a decision will be made fol-



lowing this meeting as to the suitability of the applicant to take the post. The local Children's Safeguarding Board may be contacted for information and guidance.

### **INDUCTION AND SUPPORT**

All staff and volunteers are responsible for helping to make a safer culture and should speak out if they have concerns. Child protection is a key part of our induction for new staff and volunteers.

All new employees will be given an induction programme and a handbook, which will clearly identify MRF's policies and procedures, including MRF's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy (and other policies), and make clear the expectation and codes of conduct which will govern how employees carry out their roles and responsibilities.

New staff and volunteers will start off on a probationary/trial basis. A mentoring and supervision process is in place for them. This will allow concerns on either side to be raised and responded to appropriately.

New staff and volunteers will have a designated person (supervisor) who will ensure that a proper induction takes place. The supervisor will provide regular support and supervision to the new member of staff and volunteer in all areas of their work including child protection. All new staff and volunteers will read and understand this policy as part of their induction process. Staff and volunteers will be able to identify the signs of abuse and will be confident about the steps to take and who to report any concerns.

All staff and volunteers will attend external training on child protection provided by accredited providers. Until such time, child protection training will be cascaded by supervisors/managers at the MRF.

Staff and volunteers will keep a check on visitors and guests, whether their visit is by invitation or unsolicited.

### **ONGOING SUPERVISION AND TRAINING**

Supervision and training is to be regular and ongoing. This gives everyone a chance to reflect on and improve their child protection practice and keeps safeguarding at the front of their minds. Everyone is to be kept up to date with any changes made to our safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.

## **Child and young person admission procedures**

### **PARENTAL CONSENT & CONTACT DETAILS**

A parent/carer leaving their child in the care of MRF will sign a consent form confirming this (Appendix 5: Sample Parental Consent Form, p. 42). A register of names, addresses, next of kin and contact addresses and telephone numbers for emergencies will be kept. Parents/carers, and where appropriate older children, will be given a copy of a

written statement which specifies the action to be taken in the event of a child becoming ill or being injured. The form will also indicate that any information which suggests that a child has been abused will be passed on to the Social Services Department and/or the police.

### **DESIGNATED PERSON**

There will be a named designated person and a deputy designated person for child protection. In the event of any concerns regarding a child, the designated person or deputy will be informed at the earliest available opportunity. If necessary, they will inform the relevant social services department and the management. The designated person will also ensure that the child protection procedures are kept up to date and reviewed.

### **NAMED PERSON**

Children and parents/carers will have a 'named person' to whom they may report any worries or concerns. This person will normally be the designated person or deputy.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO, ETC.**

Formal consent from parent/carers should be obtained before taking photographs, videos (Appendix 3: Photography/videoing consent form, p. 40), etc.

## **Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child/young person**

It is not the responsibility of employees/volunteers to deal with suspected abuse, but it is their responsibility to report concerns to the designated safeguarding lead or other appropriate person. It is important that all employees/volunteers should be aware of their responsibilities if child abuse is suspected.

Immediate action to ensure safety may be necessary at any stage in involvement with children and families.

- If emergency medical attention is required, this can be secured by calling an ambulance (dial 999) or taking a child to the nearest Accident & 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 Police Protection Order.

Always report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead or the MRF office.

### **RECOGNITION OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

Abuse or neglect of a child is caused by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or more rarely by a stranger.

If you notice any social changes in the behaviour of a child, worrying marks or bruises or hear a child or children talking about things which give cause for concern, then your first responsibility is to the child. It is not safe to assume that someone else will act. As an adult you have a duty to take appropriate action. Recognising and coping with child abuse is very stressful and the person reporting the concern will not have to cope alone.

The signs summarised below do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused. Similarly, there may not be any signs; you may just feel something is wrong. If you are worried report it to the designated person. It is not your responsibility to decide if it is abuse. But it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and do something about it by reporting.

### **Physical abuse**

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. A person might do this because they seek the attention they get by having a sick child. This situation is commonly described using terms such as, fabricated illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission, can also be caused through omission – or the failure to act to protect.

Possible signs of physical abuse:

- unexplained injuries or burns,
- improbable excuses given to explain injuries or refusal to discuss them,
- untreated injuries,
- admission of punishment which appears excessive,
- bald patches,
- withdrawal from physical contact,
- arms and legs covered in hot weather,
- fear of returning home,
- fear of medical help,
- self-destructive tendencies,
- aggression towards others,
- running away.

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is 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 in-

volve conveying to children that they are worthless, 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.

**Possible signs of emotional abuse:**

- slowed down physical, mental and/or emotional development,
- admission of punishment which appears excessive,
- over-reaction to mistakes,
- continual self-deprecation,
- sudden speech disorders,
- fear of new situations,
- inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations,
- neurotic/repetitive behaviour, e.g. thumb sucking, hair twisting, etc.
- self-mutilation,
- fear of parents being contacted,
- extremes of passivity or aggression,
- substance misuse,
- running away,
- compulsive stealing, scavenging.

**Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of or consents to what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex; or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. They 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.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

**Possible signs of sexual abuse:**

- lack of trust in adults and/or fear of an individual or individuals,
- overfamiliarity with adults or provocative behaviour,
- withdrawal and introversion with peer relationships,
- running away from home;



- sudden behaviour changes like falling standards, truancy, stealing etc.;
- low self-esteem,
- substance misuse,
- displaying sexual knowledge beyond age group,
- involvement in prostitution,
- oversexed behaviour;
- sleeplessness, nightmares, fear of the dark;
- bruises, scratches, bite marks;
- depression, suicide attempts;
- eating disorders (e.g. anorexia nervosa) or a change in eating habits;
- pregnancy, particularly when reluctant to name the father;
- recurring urinary tract problems/vaginal infections.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is 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 failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

#### **Possible signs of neglect:**

- constant hunger or emaciation,
- constant tiredness,
- poor personal hygiene,
- poor state of clothing,
- frequent lateness or nonattendance,
- untreated medical problems,
- destructive tendencies,
- low self-esteem,
- neurotic behaviour,
- no social relationships,
- running away,
- compulsive stealing or scavenging.

Harm also includes the impairment of a child's health or development as a result of witnessing the ill treatment of another person.



Individuals within the organisation need to be alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and also from others including abuse by members of the organisation.

### **WHAT TO DO IF CHILDREN TALK TO YOU ABOUT ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

It is recognised that a child may seek you out to share information about abuse or neglect, or talk spontaneously individually or in groups when you are present. In these situations you must:

- Listen carefully to the young person. DO NOT directly question the young person.
- Give the young person time and attention.
- Stay calm – ensure the child feels safe.
- Allow the young person to give a spontaneous account; do not stop them from freely recalling significant events.
- Accept what you have been told (this is not the same as believing or disbelieving).
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the young person's presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the young person's own words where possible.
- Tell the child that you will offer support, but that you cannot promise not to speak to authorities about the information they have shared.
- Reassure the young person that:
  - o you are glad they have told you;
  - o they have not done anything wrong;
  - o what you are going to do next.
- Explain that you will need to get help to keep the young person safe.
- DO NOT ask the young person to repeat his or her account of events to anyone.
- Do not approach or contact the alleged abuser(s).

### **REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD'S WELLBEING**

(See Appendix 1: Reporting procedure for suspected cases of child abuse (decision flowchart) p. 37.)

If you think a child is in immediate danger, contact the police on **101** or **999**.

If you're worried about a child but they are not in immediate danger, you should share your concerns.

You may become concerned about a young person who has not spoken to you, because of your observations of, or information about that young person. It is good practice to ask a young person why they are upset or how a cut or bruise was caused or respond to a young person wanting to talk to you. This practice can help clarify vague concerns and result in appropriate action.

If you are concerned about a young person you must pass your concerns onto the designated safeguarding / child protection lead (contact details below).

- Record the concern or incident using the Incident Report Form (see Appendix 2: Incident Report Form, p. 38), including, date and time of what has occurred and the time the disclosure was made. Record the names of the people involved and what was said and done by whom and any action taken.
- Inform the designated safeguarding/child protection lead or another senior member of staff or deputy immediately (see contacts below). Remember that confidentiality is of the utmost importance. The senior staff member will contact the appropriate authorities including the Duty Social Worker in the area where the child lives as soon as possible.
- If the matter is urgent and none of the above can be contacted, then contact social services or the police: Croydon Safeguarding Children Board **0208 604 7275**, police **101**, or the NSPCC helpline on **0808 800 5000**.

Social services will risk-assess the situation and take action to protect the child as appropriate either through statutory involvement or other support. This may include making a referral to the local authority.

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. A referral should normally be made by the designated safeguarding / child protection lead. However, ALL staff can refer their concerns directly to Croydon Safeguarding Children Board **0208 604 7275**, police **101**, or the NSPCC helpline on **0808 800 5000**.

Concerns would normally be shared with parents/carers as soon as possible. However, there could be circumstances when this could put the child at greater risk or there may be concerns that parents/carers will not respond appropriately.

Every effort will be made by social services to respect the anonymity, if requested, of the person reporting the abuse. However, if allegations result in court proceedings, this may not be possible.

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or volunteer, Social Services will follow the same procedure as they do to investigate allegations of abuse in a family.

### **Information to include in your report**

Please refer to Appendix 2: Incident Report Form, p. 38).



Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible (in emergency situations all this information may not be available). Unavailability of some information should not stop you making a referral.

- Your name, telephone number, position and request the same of the person to whom you are speaking
- Full name and address, telephone number of family, date of birth of child and siblings
- Gender, ethnicity, first language, any special needs
- Names, dates of birth and relationship of household members and any significant others
- The names of professionals known to be involved with the child/family, e.g. GP, Health Visitor, School
- The nature of the concern, and the basis for it.
- An opinion on whether the child may need urgent action to make them safe.
- Your view of what appears to be the needs of the child and family.
- Whether the consent of a parent or a person with parental responsibility has been given to the referral being made

#### **ACTION TO BE TAKEN FOLLOWING THE REFERRAL**

- Ensure that you keep an accurate record of your concern(s) made at the time.
- Put your concerns in writing to social services following the referral (within 48 hours).
- Accurately record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

MRF should ensure that any records made in relation to a referral should be kept confidentially 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. Please see Confidentiality: guidelines for youth work, p. 28 for more information.

#### **DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS**

Head: Magdalene Adenaike, 020 3633 0560, [magdalene@music-relief.org](mailto:magdalene@music-relief.org)

Deputy: Olga Shaumyan, 020 3633 0560, [office@music-relief.org](mailto:office@music-relief.org)

Trustee for safeguarding: Jonathan Bob-Amara, Board Chair, 020 3633 0560, [jonathan@music-relief.org](mailto:jonathan@music-relief.org)

## **Managing allegations against staff and volunteers**

### **REPORTING ABUSE**

MRF takes any concerns raised about staff or volunteers seriously, regardless of who the person is or how long they've been involved with the organisation.

MRF designated safeguarding officer will not attempt to investigate the matter, but will gather the facts of the case and keep written records.

If an allegation is made that a staff member or volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child,
- committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child,
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children,

the allegation will be reported immediately to the relevant agencies (Croydon Safeguarding Children Board **0208 604 7275**, police **101**, or the NSPCC helpline on **0800 800 5000**).

### **RESIGNATIONS AND 'SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS'**

If someone resigns from their post or refuses to cooperate with the process, this must not prevent an allegation being followed up.

'Settlement agreements' (where a person agrees to resign and the employer agrees not to pursue disciplinary action) must not be used in cases of alleged abuse.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY AND SUPPORT**

We will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of all parties while an allegation or concern is being investigated. We will make sure everyone involved in the investigation understands this.

We will endeavour to support the children involved, their parents or carers, and individuals who have had an allegation made against them by:

- telling parents or carers and the employee or volunteer concerned about the allegation as soon as possible (as long as this does not place any children at further risk of harm);
- telling them how the allegation is being managed;
- keeping everyone informed about the progress and outcomes of the case.

### **RECORD KEEPING**

MRF designated safeguarding lead will keep a clear and comprehensive summary of:

- all allegations that have been made;

- details of how allegations have been followed up and investigated;
- decisions made about the allegation and actions taken.

### **REFERRAL TO AUTHORITIES**

If MRF removes a member of staff or volunteer from working with children because they pose a risk of harm (or if MRF would have but the person has resigned or left), we will inform the relevant barring agency (DBS). Failure to do this is a criminal offence.

The matter will also be reported the appropriate regulatory bodies:

- the Charity Commission for England and Wales;
- Croydon Safeguarding Children Board (0208 604 7275);
- volunteer/staff recruitment agency; et al.

The final report is to be analysed for lessons to be learnt.

## **Managing allegations against a child (peer abuse)**

### **TYPE OF ALLEGATIONS**

There are many ways that a child may be abusive towards others. A child who is displaying abusive behaviour may not realise they are doing so.

When a child abuses another child, it is sometimes called 'peer on peer abuse' or 'peer abuse' (Department for Education, 2018; Department of Health, 2017).

Allegations may involve:

- bullying or cyberbullying,
- emotional abuse,
- online abuse,
- physical abuse,
- sexting,
- harmful sexual behaviour,
- sexual abuse.

### **IDENTIFYING CONCERNS**

There is a range of ways concerns might be raised.

- A child or adult might make a direct allegation of abuse by a child or young person.

- A child or adult might tell you they're uncomfortable with a child or young person's behaviour. They may not realise the behaviour is abusive.
- A member of staff or volunteer might observe behaviour that gives cause for concern and make a report following the MRF safeguarding procedures.
- MRF may be informed that a child or young person is the subject of an investigation.
- A child or young person might tell you they have harmed someone else or are at risk of doing so.
- Sexting used to blackmail or abuse.

### **RESPONDING TO CONCERNS**

When responding to an allegation of abuse made against a child, it's important to consider the needs of everyone involved.

#### **Talking to a child who tells you they have behaved abusively**

Sometimes a child may tell you directly that they have behaved abusively towards someone else. If this happens:

- Reassure the child that they've done the right thing by telling you about it.
- Listen carefully to the child and let them tell their whole story. Don't try to investigate or quiz the child, but make sure you understand what they're saying.
- Use non-judgemental language.
- Remember that a child who is telling you they've abused someone else is a child in need of support.
- Tell them that you now have to do what you can to keep them and the other children involved safe.
- Explain what you are going to do next and that you will need to speak to other people who can help.
- Reassure the child that they can get help to change their behaviour and move forward with their life.
- You may want to suggest the child contacts Childline or NSPCC for support. Never promise to keep what a child tells you a secret. Explain that you need to talk to other people who can help keep them and the other children involved safe.

#### **Talking to a child who may be behaving abusively**

If allegations have been made against a child you should speak to your nominated child protection lead, who can advise you on the best way to proceed. If you confront the child about the allegations before taking advice, it may make the situation worse.

For more advice about speaking to a child who may be behaving abusively, contact the NSPCC Helpline on **0808 800 5000** or by emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

Sometimes you may have noticed a child behaving inappropriately and you may need to talk to them about this immediately, in order to manage the behaviour. Remember that they may not realise their behaviour is unacceptable. Talk to them calmly and explain why their behaviour is unsuitable and what they can do to improve it. Refer the young person to the code of conduct which everyone in MRF agrees to.

Be aware that a child who displays challenging behaviour may be doing so because they have experienced abuse or neglect. If you think this may be the case, follow the MRF safeguarding procedures.

### **Making notes**

It's important to keep accurate and detailed notes on any concerns you have about a child. You will need to share this record with your nominated child protection lead. Include:

- the child's details (name, age, address)
- what the child said or did that gave you cause for concern (if the child made a verbal disclosure, write down their exact words)
- the details of any other children involved or impacted.

### **DECIDING IF A CONCERN IS A CHILD PROTECTION ISSUE**

When a child or young person behaves inappropriately towards another child, a decision needs to be made about whether there may be a child protection concern.

Refer the case to the MRF nominated child protection lead to make this decision in consultation with:

- the volunteer or staff member who is responsible for the supervision/pastoral care of the children involved,
- the senior manager or trustee responsible for safeguarding,
- any other agencies you know are working with the child,
- the local child protection services if necessary.

### **An allegation becomes a child protection concern when:**

- The behaviour involves sexual assault or physical assault.
- The child who has experienced the abusive behaviour has suffered significant harm.
- The behaviour forms part of a pattern of concerning behaviour by the child or young person who is being abusive.
- The child carrying out the abuse is displaying harmful sexual behaviour.
- You are concerned that the child carrying out the abuse may be doing so because they have experienced abuse or other upsetting experiences themselves.



It is also a child protection concern when there's a significant difference of power between the child who is displaying abusive behaviour and the person being abused, for example when:

- there's an age difference of more than two years;
- there's a significant difference in terms of size or level of ability;
- the child displaying abusive behaviour holds a position of power (such as being a helper, volunteer or informal leader);
- the child being abused is significantly more vulnerable than the other child or young person.

When in doubt, contact the NSPCC Helpline on **0808 800 5000** or by emailing **help@nspcc.org.uk**. They are trained to talk through your concerns, give expert advice and take action to protect the child as appropriate. This may include making a referral to the local authority. Or discuss the matter with your local authority child protection services.

### **TELLING PARENTS THAT THEIR CHILD MAY HAVE ABUSED SOMEONE ELSE**

The child's parents or carers should be told what has happened, as long as it doesn't increase the risk to the child.

Ask the child how they would like their parents/carers to be told. You could suggest:

- talking to parents first without the child there, then summarising everything with the child present
- helping the child tell their parents in their own words, with you present for support.

It's important for parents and children to talk about what's happened and begin to come to terms with it as a family.

When talking to parents or carers, remember that the news their child has behaved abusively may be a shock. Reassure them that support is available to help their child change their behaviour and move forward.

### **Support for parents**

Signpost parents/carers to appropriate support. Some organisations that may be helpful for parents/carers include:

- Family Lives (<https://www.familylives.org.uk/>), which helps parents/carers to deal with a range of challenges
- The Lucy Faithfull Foundation (<https://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk/>), which provides support around child sexual abuse/harmful sexual behaviour.



## **TAKING ACTION TO KEEP ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE**

Depending on the nature of the allegation or concern, you may need to take action to protect and support children who have experienced peer abuse.

You should also consider how best to support the child against whom the allegation was made.

### **Sanctions**

Refer a young person to the behaviour code which explains how MRF expects people to behave and sets out what sanctions will apply to anybody who chooses not to behave appropriately.

### **Emotional support**

If peer abuse has taken place, this may have an emotional impact on everyone in the group. Make sure children, young people and adult supervisors have access to the emotional support they need and know who they can talk to if they are worried about anything.

Childline provides confidential help and advice for children and young people. Calls to **0800 1111** are free and children can also contact Childline online. One can download or order Childline posters and wallet cards.

### **Risk assessment**

Conduct a risk assessment and develop a risk management plan to make sure you are doing everything you can to keep all your children and young people safe. Things to consider include:

- any relevant information from other agencies, such as care plans or multi-agency assessments;
- making sure the child who is alleged to have carried out the abuse is separated from the children who experienced the abuse;
- separating the child who is alleged to have carried out the abuse from other children where there is a risk of further abuse;
- whether the children who experienced the abuse are at risk of bullying or victimisation from others and what prevention measures are needed;
- whether the child who is alleged to have carried out the abuse is at risk of any retaliation and what action can be taken to keep them safe.

### **Multi-agency working**

If statutory agencies are investigating and assessing the situation you should stay in contact with them and share all relevant information with multi-agency partners.

## **Recording concerns and information sharing**

### **RECORDING CONCERNS ABOUT CHILDREN'S SAFETY & WELLBEING**

If anyone in MRF has concerns about a child's or young person's welfare or safety, all relevant details are recorded. This will be done regardless of whether the concerns are shared with the police or children's social care. We will keep an accurate factual record of:

- the date and time of the incident/disclosure,
- the date and time of the report,
- the name and role of the person to whom the concern was originally reported and their contact details,
- the name and role of the person making the report (if this is different to the above) and their contact details,
- the names of all parties who were involved in the incident, including any witnesses,
- the name, age and any other relevant information about the child who is the subject of the concern (including information about their parents or carers and any siblings),
- what was said or done and by whom,
- any action taken to look into the matter,
- any further action taken (such as a referral being made),
- the reasons why the organisation decided not to refer those concerns to a statutory agency (if relevant).

The record will be signed and dated by the person making the report (see Appendix 2: Incident Report Form, p. 38). All disclosures are confidential and will be kept securely. It will be kept until shared with an appropriate government agency.

### **INFORMATION TO BE SHARED**

Whenever MRF receives information that raises concerns about a child or children, decisions need to be made about information sharing. This could include:

- concerns about a child received within or outside MRF,
- concerns about a person in a position of trust – this could include information on a DBS check,
- concerns about an event venue or other safeguarding issues.

## **INFORMATION SHARING GUIDELINES**

MRF will follow '7 Golden Rules' of information sharing as outlined by the Government guidance, Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (July 2018):

1. **Remember that the Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers** to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. **Be open and honest with the individual** (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. **Seek advice from other practitioners** if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. **Share with informed consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk.
5. **Consider safety and well-being:** Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure:** Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. **Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it** – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

MRF may share information with the following services and individuals:

- Statutory organisations, such as the police and/or children's services, must be informed about child protection concerns; designated officers should be consulted where there are concerns about someone in a position of trust.
- Disclosure & Barring Service must be informed of any concerns about someone in regulated activity who is suspended or expelled from the organisation.
- Other clubs and youth organisations: informing other organisations needs to be considered according to the 'Golden Rules' (above) in order that they can safeguard children in their care who may be at risk of harm.
- Individuals within the organisation: this will be decided on the basis of who needs to know what information in order to keep children safe according to the principles below.

## **Confidentiality: guidelines for youth work**

MRF upholds the rights of young people using the service to receive a professional and respectful response to their needs, and believes that a policy of confidentiality is integral to this. Youth workers have always been aware of the unique relationship they have with young people they work with. Young people will discuss problems or pass on information about others trusting that the information will go no further. The special relationship that exists between youth worker and young person depends a great deal on such trust.

In a youth work setting, confidentiality extends to cases when a young person makes any attempt to restrict the environment or the audience by, for example, asking to talk in private, moving you away from others before talking, and/or talking in a whisper. Even if a confidence may seem trivial, it does not mean it should be treated with any less discretion. It is not for youth workers to judge what personal information is.

### **LEGAL ASPECTS**

The concept of a 'confidential relationship' is recognised by law. Certain professions have an obligation of confidentiality, by the nature of the relationship that exists between the worker and the client. There can be little doubt that the youth worker is included in this group. A young person therefore has the right to have their confidence respected, and the youth worker has an obligation to maintain and respect that right.

Exceptional circumstances where confidentiality cannot be maintained and a young person's wishes must be overridden:

- The young person is in a life-threatening situation (including self-harm).
- Inaction might place them or someone else in a life-threatening situation
- If a young person is threatened by an abuser
- The young person discloses that a sexual offence has taken place
- Where the rights of other young people who have not been consulted would be infringed
- Where someone else could be harmed

This does not include disclosure about a young person's

- drug use,
- illegal activity,
- sexual activity (including sexting) except where it meets the exceptional circumstances above.

### **DEALING WITH REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION FROM OTHER AGENCIES**

Youth workers may from time to time be asked to disclose confidential information about a young person to another professional, service or agency. Such information

should generally only be released with the consent of the young person or where it is necessary for the protection of the young person or a third party.

### **DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO OTHERS**

To avoid losing the trust and confidence of a young person by having to break their confidence, youth workers should, wherever possible try and pre-empt disclosure of, for example, abuse, and inform the young person that if they do decide to reveal information the youth worker will have no choice but to act on it.

### **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE TO DISCLOSE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION?**

When a decision is taken to disclose confidential information, the following procedure must be followed:

- The youth worker must inform their immediate line manager, who will then pass the information on. Speed is of essence, especially in cases where exceptional circumstances apply.
- An action plan will be agreed with the Head of Service, which will include an agreement as to who informs Social Services. In these circumstances Youth workers have a statutory duty to inform Social Services of 'suspected or identified abuse', whether sexual or physical, which would include information disclosed about another young person.
- Whenever possible this should be done with permission of the young person, who may need a lot of in depth support from the youth worker to be able to make this decision. However, with or without the permission of the young person involved, the information must be passed on to Social Services.
- Confidential 'file notes' need to record the incident as soon after as possible, and actions taken.

## **Data protection**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE**

- Young people should be informed of exactly who will have access to the information and what the information will be used for. All personal information such as C-card (<https://youngandfree.org.uk/join-the-c-card-scheme/>), consent forms and medical information should be stored in a locked cabinet in the office.
- Young people have the right to access information about themselves at any time.
- Records should be kept in a secure locked place and be protected from unsupervised access.
- Information on computer should be stored on disk, not on hard drive, and the disk kept secure.

- Records should be kept no longer than necessary.
- Any correspondence that is carried out which names the individual, should be done with the knowledge and consent of that individual; copies of letters and correspondence should be kept secure.
- Information imparted as confidential must remain confidential even when there is no longer any contact with the young person.

### **CHILD PROTECTION RECORD RETENTION AND STORAGE**

MRF will only collect the information that is:

- adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purpose(s) for which they are held,
- accurate and up to date,
- only kept for as long as is necessary, normally as long as relationship with us lasts (Information Commissioner's Office, 2019).
- Parental e-mails might be kept for further e-mail notifications where consent is given.

### **INFORMATION ABOUT YOUTH WORKERS**

- All staff members should receive a list of all youth workers' names with their contact numbers/addresses, unless there is a reasonable request not to do so.
- A youth worker's address/telephone number should be passed on to other relevant individuals or organisations only with the individual's consent.
- Relevant medical information about workers should be shared with a staff team only with the individual's consent.
- Personal information about staff members should not be given to young people without the individual's permission.
- As with young people, all records/information should be kept secure.

## **Code of conduct for staff and volunteers**

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

- Safety of participants and employees/volunteers is always of prime consideration. All accidents involving anyone should be recorded as soon as practicably possible. Employees/volunteers are responsible for familiarising themselves with building/venue safety issues, such as, fire procedures, location of emergency exits, location of emergency telephones and first aid equipment.
- Risk assessment should be undertaken prior to any offsite visits or new types of activities.



- Employees/volunteers working with children should feel qualified to ensure the safe provision of services, use of equipment, activities undertaken, etc.
- Employees/volunteers working with children should carefully plan activity sessions with the care and safety of children as their main concern including the use of activities at an appropriate age/ability level.
- Employees/volunteers should ensure that their activities start and end on time. Employees/volunteers are expected to promote, demonstrate and incorporate the values of fair play, trust and ethics throughout their activities.
- Wherever possible, we will encourage an 'open environment' e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and discouraging the keeping of secrets. This especially means that employees/volunteers should not be alone with a child at any time. When this is unavoidable, it should be done with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation and/or the children's parents/carers.
- Employees/volunteers must treat all children/young people with respect.
- Employees/volunteers must not make racist, sexist or any other remarks which upset or humiliate.
- Employees/volunteers must take care to avoid showing any favouritism.
- Employees/volunteers should avoid smoking in front of people we work with.
- It is the responsibility of employees/volunteers to prevent the abuse of younger or weaker children by older or stronger children through bullying, cruelty or any other forms of humiliation.
- Arrangements for parents/carers to drop off and collect children from activities/trips need to be clearly stated and agreed by parents/carers, children and employees/volunteers.
- Employees/volunteers are responsible for reporting suspected cases of child abuse to the appropriate individuals and/or agencies.
- Employees/volunteers will be expected to keep an attendance register for all organised sessions.
- Employees/volunteers will have access to parents' consent and emergency contact forms for all children taking part in activities they lead (this information is confidential).
- External employees/volunteers should be adequately insured, to protect against claims of negligence, through their organisation or their own personal insurance if acting as a self-employed agent.

### **WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

MRF and its agents work with young people. It is our aim to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all young people and to support the volunteers in providing a safe, caring



environment. Volunteers will work under the direct supervision of an established staff member.

Youth volunteers should set examples of appropriate behaviour, as young people learn by example. Volunteers should avoid using sarcasm, direct criticism, labelling and unnecessary competition or comparison.

- Good behaviour should be positively encouraged.
- Volunteers should not physically punish any young person.
- Volunteers should not deprive any child of food or drink, nor force a child to consume.
- Volunteers should not humiliate or frighten any young person.
- Volunteers should avoid situations in which they put themselves or the young person at risk. This includes being alone with a young person unnecessarily.
- Volunteers should always respect a young person and be sensitive to their feelings.

Employees/volunteers should NEVER:

- engage in rough physical activities, even when playing;
- engage in sexually proactive activities (e.g. allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form; make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child);
- allow children use inappropriate language;
- let a child's allegation go unanswered; each allegation must be recorded;
- reduce a child to tears as a form of control;
- engage children in tasks for which they feel inadequately trained or feel apprehensive about.

Employees/volunteers should normally not do things of a personal nature for a child. If you do have to do things of a personal nature for a child, e.g. take them to the toilet, support, lift, etc., particularly if they are very young or a child with additional needs, then ensure MRF has the full consent of their parents or obtain permission from the person you are answerable to. In an emergency which requires this type of help, parents and your line manager should be fully informed as soon as practicable.

## **Adult to child supervision ratios**

MRF will aspire to adhere to the NSPCC-recommended adult to child supervision ratios:

- 1 adult to 8 children aged 9-12 years;
- 1 adult to 10 young people aged 13-18 years.

A minimum of 2 staff are required for running groups and detached work.



In the situation of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, it is recommended that activity groups should not be more than 15, counting both children and adults.

## Anti-bullying

### THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS POLICY STATEMENT

MRF works with children and families as part of its activities. These include youth club activities and outings, holiday programmes, mentoring, after-school activity packages. The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to prevent bullying from happening between children and young people who are a part of our organisation or take part in our activities;
- to make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need to provide information to all staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying.

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of MRF, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students. Separate documents set out:

- our code of behaviour for children, young people and adults
- our policies and procedures for preventing and responding to bullying and harassment that takes place between adults involved with our organisation.

### WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying shall be defined as: ‘Persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating or insulting behaviour, abuse of power or unfair penal sanctions which makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable, which undermines their self-confidence and which may cause them to suffer stress.’ It includes a range of abusive behaviours that are **repeated** and **intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally**. Types of bullying include:

- physical, such as hitting, kicking, taking belongings;
- verbal, such as name-calling, insulting, unkind remarks, including remarks about race/colour, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation and physical appearance;
- social, such as spreading vicious rumours or excluding someone from social groups.

### LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seek to protect children in the UK. The NSPCC provides summaries of the key legislation and guidance on:



- bullying learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying
- online abuse learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/online-abuse
- child protection learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system

## **BULLYING PREVENTION**

### **We at MRF believe that:**

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind;
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

### **We recognise that:**

- bullying causes real distress. It can affect a person's health and development and, at the extreme, can cause significant harm
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

### **We will seek to prevent bullying by:**

- developing a code of behaviour that sets out how everyone involved in our organisation is expected to behave, in face-to-face contact and online, and within and outside of our activities
- holding regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families who use our organisation about bullying and how to prevent it. These discussions will focus on:
  - group members' responsibilities to look after one another and uphold the behaviour code or practising skills such as listening to each other;
  - respecting the fact that we are all different;
  - making sure that no one is without friends;
  - dealing with problems in a positive way;
  - checking that our anti-bullying measures are working well.
- providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racial, sexist, homophobic and sexual bullying
- putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place
- making sure our response to incidents of bullying takes into account:
  - the needs of the person being bullied,
  - the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour,

- needs of any bystanders,
- our organisation as a whole.
- reviewing the plan developed to address any incidents of bullying at regular intervals, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved in the long term.

We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity. Hence, we will be proactive about:

- seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference,
- increasing diversity within our staff, volunteers, children and young people,
- welcoming new members to our organisation.

### **REPORTING BULLYING**

All incidents of bullying should be reported to the manager, or where this is not possible to a senior staff or board member.

MRF will not tolerate bullying of any sort in the workplace. We will:

- pursue all complaints made with as much confidentiality as possible;
- treat all complaints fairly and seriously;
- record, sign and date all complaints;
- recognise that the situation must be resolved;
- deal with conflict swiftly;
- recognise that staff have the right to withdraw from any situation considered to be bullying;
- make every effort to provide professional, managerial and emotional support as necessary.
- enforce disciplinary action, as outlined in the disciplinary policy if a member of staff is found guilty of bullying. Staff found guilty of harassment will face disciplinary action as outlined in the MRF disciplinary procedures.

More information on bullying and cyberbullying is available from <http://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying>.

### **Photography and image sharing guidance**

Formal permission from parent/carer should be obtained before taking photographs, videos, etc. using the form below. No consent means no photography. (See Appendix 3: Photography/videoing consent form, p. 40.)



## **Media Policy**

This policy applies to the MRF website, social media pages as well as dealing with the media.

### **MRF WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES**

Only approved employees and volunteers will be allowed to post on the MRF website or social media pages.

Only approved employees/volunteers will be allowed to send/receive messages on social media and official web page.

All employees who admin for MRF have a duty to monitor MRF social media accounts, remove any offensive posts and report to the manager.

Approved employees/volunteers are responsible for content they post and must not upload any abusive, pornographic, discriminatory or derogatory content.

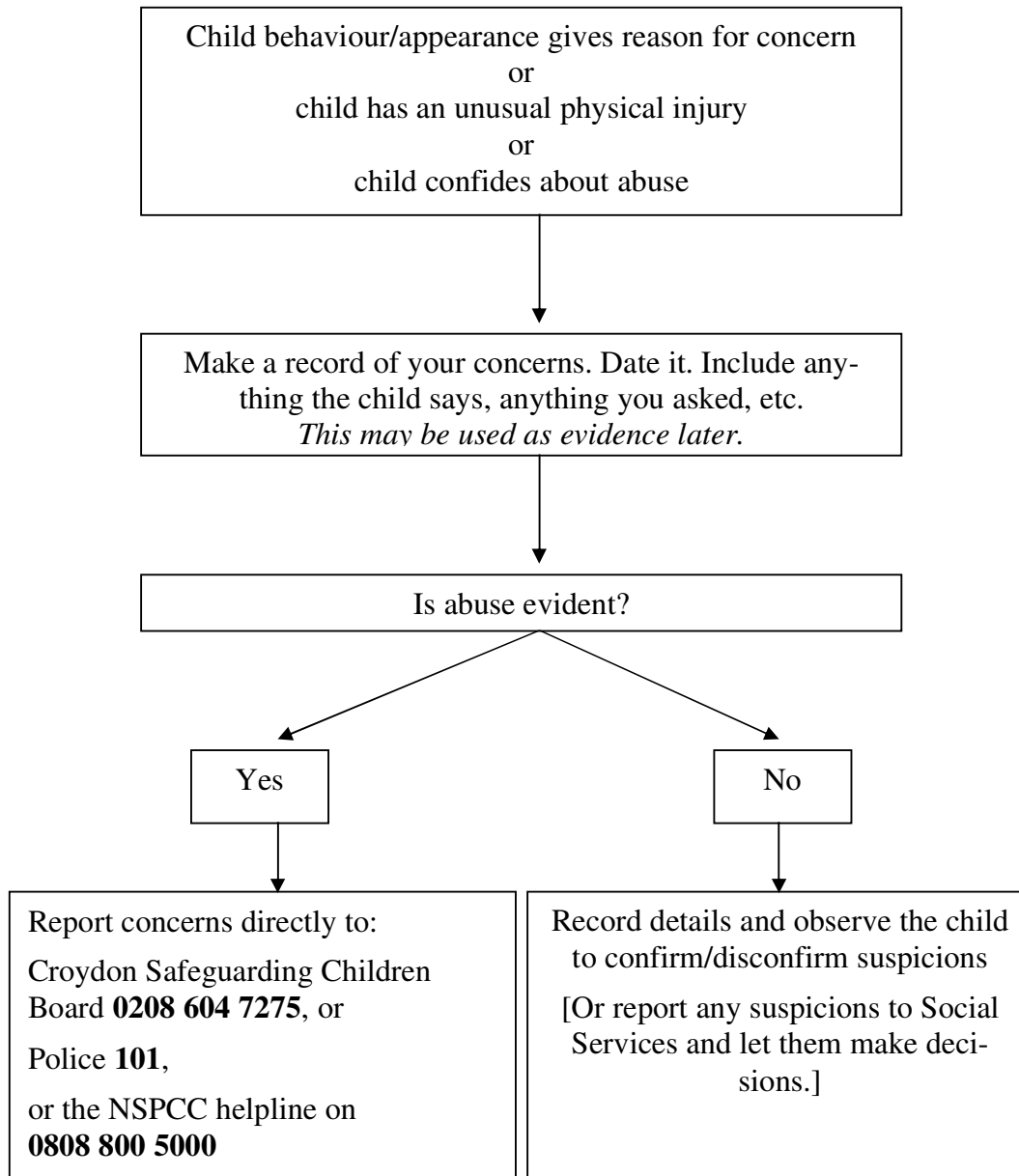
Complaints received on social media will be referred to the senior management and will be responded to **within 21 days**.

Employees should not add, use personal accounts to message or communicate with young people attending MRF activities. It is good practice for all employees to have their personal accounts set to private.

### **DEALING WITH THE MEDIA**

To continue to promote the reputable image of MRF, all communications with the media should first be approved by the management. If any staff member/volunteer is approached by the media in regards to MRF please refer them to the senior manager.

## Appendix 1: Reporting procedure for suspected cases of child abuse (decision flowchart)





## Appendix 2: Incident Report Form

**Part 1 to be completed by person receiving the allegation or raising the concern.**

**Part 2 to be completed by the CEO or trustee dealing with this incident.**

*Please remember to maintain confidentiality on the ‘need to know’ basis – do not discuss this incident with anyone other than your manager or those who need to know. Please take advice on this point from your manager if you are uncertain.*

<b>PART 1</b>	
Name of a person who has received the allegation:	
Role / link to MRF (e.g. volunteer, service user etc.)	
Date of notification:	Time of notification:
Young person’s details:	
Name:	Age (enter 18+ if adult)
How was this allegation received and how was the safeguarding concern raised (include location, setting, circumstances, etc.):	
What was said and/or observed (include the appearance and behaviour of the victim, description of any injuries incl. location, size etc.):	
Action(s) taken (e.g. persons consulted, agencies called – specify when):	
Signature of person filling in Part 1 of this form:	
Date:	
Have the parents been informed that contact is going to be made with social services (cross out as appropriate): Yes / No NB: <i>Parents should always be informed unless doing so could place the child at risk of further harm. Please seek advice of the duty social worker if you are uncertain.</i>	

For advice, consult Croydon’s Single Point of Contact (SPOC): Phone: **020 8255 2888**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm or out of hours: Croydon’s Emergency Duty Team: Phone: **0208 726 6400**, Monday to Friday, 5pm to 9am, 24 hours on weekends and bank holidays



### Incident Report Form cont'd: Part 2

**Part 1 to be completed by person receiving the allegation or raising the concern.**

**Part 2 to be completed by the CEO or trustee dealing with this incident.**

<b>PART 2</b>	
Name of a person who has received the completed form:	
Position in MRF:	
Date report of allegation was received:	Time report of allegation was received:
Action(s) taken (include dates / times):	
<input type="checkbox"/>	External referral made (e.g. Children's Social Services): Date:
Other comments including outcomes:	
Signature of person closing the incident:	
Date:	

**Contact numbers for reporting:**

If the child is in immediate danger, call 999.

Croydon Social Services: Report your concern to Croydon's Single Point of Contact (SPOC):

Phone: **020 8255 2888**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Out of hours: if you have any urgent concerns which need an immediate response at night or on the weekend, please contact Croydon's Emergency Duty Team: Phone: **0208 726 6400**, Monday to Friday, 5pm to 9am, 24 hours on weekends and bank holidays

Croydon Safeguarding Children Board: 0208 604 7275

Police **101**

NSPCC helpline **0808 800 5000**



### Appendix 3: Photography/videoing consent form

## Photography/Video Consent Form

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Occasionally, we may take photos/videos of the children engaged in the activity provided by Music Relief. We may use these images as a record of the day and as part of Music Relief promotional materials. We may also use them on our website and our social media accounts.

If we use photographs of individual children, we will not use the name of that child in the accompanying text or photo caption. If we name a child in the text, we will not use a photograph of that child to accompany the article. If a child has won an award and the parent would like the name of their child to accompany their picture, we will obtain permission from the parent before using the image.

To comply with the GDPR regulations, we need your permission before we can photograph or make any recordings of your child. Please answer the questions below, then sign and date the form where shown and return the completed form to the Music Relief.

Please circle your answer

I give permission for my child’s photograph to be used in Music Relief promotional and informational materials.	Yes / No
I give permission for my child’s image to be used on our website.	Yes / No
I give permission for my child’s image to be used on the Music Relief social media sites (e.g. Facebook & Twitter)	Yes / No
I give permission for my child to appear in the media.	Yes / No

Parent’s/guardian’s signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name \_\_\_\_\_

### Conditions of use

This form is valid indefinitely from the date you sign it.

We will not re-use any photographs or recordings a year after your child leaves the activity. Historic photographs will remain on our website and social media feeds.

We will not use the personal details or full names (which means first name and surname) of any child or adult in a photographic image or video on our website, on our social media platforms, in our promotional leaflets (unless requested to do so by the parent or guardian).

If we use photographs of individual children, we will not use the name of that child in the accompanying text or photo caption.

If we name a child in the text, we will not use an individual photograph of that child to accompany the article.

We may use group photographs or footage with very general labels, such as ‘a fencing session’ or ‘museum outing’.

We will only use images of children who are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of such images being used inappropriately.

Websites and social media platforms can be viewed throughout the world and not just in the United Kingdom where UK law applies.





## Appendix 4: Online conduct agreement

MRF activities are not normally involved with the internet, although it has become indispensable during the Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, MRF understands the importance of young people’s being able to use the internet for education and personal development. This includes social media platforms, games and apps. We aim to support young people in making constructive use of these resources. Yet, safeguards need to be in place to ensure young people are kept safe at all times. This agreement is part of our overarching code of behaviour for children and young people, as well as for staff and volunteers, and represents our online safety policy.

### ONLINE CONDUCT AGREEMENT

**Young person:** Please read the following agreement and discuss it with your parents/carers and group leader.

**Parents/carers:** please read and discuss this agreement with your child and then sign it, ask your child to sign it, and return it to the group leader. If you have any questions or concerns please speak to Magdalene Adenaike, the CEO.

#### Young person’s agreement:

- I will be responsible for my behaviour when using the internet, including social media.
- This includes the resources I access and the language I use.
- I will not deliberately browse, download or upload material that could be considered offensive or illegal. If I accidentally come across any such material, I will report it immediately to the group leader.
- I will not send anyone material that could be considered threatening, bullying, offensive or illegal.
- I will not give out any personal information online, such as my name, phone number or address.
- I will not reveal my passwords to anyone.
- I will not arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone I meet online unless I have discussed this with my parents and/or group leader and am accompanied by a trusted adult.
- If I am concerned or upset about anything I see on the internet or any messages that I receive, I know I can talk to a MRF representative.

I understand that these rules are designed to keep me safe and that if I choose not to follow them, MRF may contact my parents/carers.

#### Signatures:

We have discussed this online safety agreement and [child’s name]\_agrees to follow the rules set out above.

Parent/carer’s signature ..... Date: .....

Young person’s signature ..... Date .....



Appendix 5: Sample Parental Consent Form

PARENT/GUARDIAN/CARER CONSENT FORM

ACTIVITY: ..... Dates: .....

All sessions are run in compliance with safeguarding guidelines.

Please complete the following, sign and return to: office@music-relief.com (hard copies could be delivered on arrival) by: [date]

Name of Child .....

Date of Birth.....

Age.....

Parent/ Guardian / Carer.....

Address: .....

Postcode .....

Tel (day)..... Tel (evening).....

Mobile..... e-mail .....

Does your child suffer from any medical conditions/allergies that MRF should be aware of (including any current medication)?.....

Please provide details of medication that must be administered: .....

Emergency contact details: (If different from above).....

Name:..... Telephone no: .....

Relationship to child: .....

CONSENT (please read carefully)

I agree to my son/daughter taking part in the activities provided Music Relief Foundation. I confirm to the best of my knowledge that my son/daughter does not suffer from any medical condition other than those listed above.

I consent to my son/daughter travelling by any form of public transport, minibus or motor vehicle driven provided by MRF or any other parent attending, to any event in which the MRF is participating. I understand that MRF accepts no responsibility for loss, damage or injury caused by or during attendance on any of the activities organised by MRF except where such loss, damage or injury can be shown to result directly from the negligence of MRF.

Signed .....(Parent/Guardian/Carer)

Date: .....