



Marie Collins
Foundation

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

DOCUMENT HISTORY

ACTION	DATE APPROVED BY MCF BOARD OF TRUSTEES
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Reviewed version 4.0	17 th March 2016
Reviewed amended to include updated definition for CSE and replaced CRB with DBS. Version 5.0	17 th March 2017
Removal of Information and Data Management sections to a separate policy. Version 6.0	11 th June 2018
Reviewed and amended to include flow chart, related policies, glossary and child friendly version. Version 7.0	7 th July 2020
Reviewed and amended to include UK GDPR, DPA 2018, child-friendly statement and online safety policy statement. Version 8.0	20 th July 2021
Version 9.0 Significant review. Updated designated safeguarding lead role in absence of CEO, location of files, related policies	28 th July 2022
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Next review date: July 2026

Signature of Chair:

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MCF COMMITMENT

Due to the nature of our work, some of the staff at MCF will have direct contact with children and vulnerable adults. For this reason, all staff, trustees, members of our Lived Experience Group (LEG), volunteers and MCF representatives must follow this Safeguarding Policy.

MCF will always seek to ensure that any activities we undertake are safe through ensuring that risks are minimised. We will do this by:

- Following Safer Recruitment processes when appointing staff, trustees, volunteers (including the Lived Experience Group) and representatives of MCF, including undertaking all appropriate checks.
- Provision of Safeguarding awareness training for all.
- Undertaking risk assessment of work carried out with children.
- Responding to accidents, complaints, disclosures of abuse or where abuse is discovered.
- Ensuring adequate insurance cover for any activity.
- Ensuring our Safeguarding Policy is accessible to children.
- Reviewing all safeguarding incidents through the bi-annual risk management meetings.

For the purposes of this document:

- A child is defined as that of being under 18 years of age.

- A vulnerable adult is defined as someone who is over 18 years of age and is receiving, or in need of help and services to live in the community. A vulnerable adult may be unable to take care of themselves and/or be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation by other people.
- Reference to a child(ren) throughout this report, requires the same actions that would apply to a vulnerable adult.
- Reference to staff incorporates the same actions that would apply to trustees, volunteers, consultants, members of LEG and MCF representatives.

1.0 WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and is the action taken by staff to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, regardless of when that harm occurred.

This includes:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

Working together to safeguard children (2023)

1.1 MCF Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for MCF is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). On occasions when the CEO is unavailable, this role will be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO).

1.2 Responding to a child protection concern.

If a child or young person is in immediate danger or injured, emergency services must be contacted by dialling 999.

All concerns must be raised as a priority with the DSL and the procedures outlined in the flow chart detailed in **Appendix 1 Responding to a Safeguarding Concern** must be followed.

The reporting of concerns to statutory agencies must be seen as a priority and responded to promptly, if contacting children social care, it will be the local authority where the child lives.

Recording should include:

- What the child or young person has said.
- How the worker has responded.

- Any discussions with the DSL or their deputy or any other agencies.
- Any relevant information about the child or young person's physical appearance or behaviour.
- The child may have written or drawn material from the child (these items will need to be retained)
- Details of the police/professional the concerns were reported to.

Remember that your records may be used as evidence in any criminal proceedings, and referring concerns may need to be submitted on the format required by the receiving agency.

1.4 Storing of safeguarding concerns

Records will be timed, dated and signed legibly and kept in the HR Safeguarding folder on MCF's OneDrive which has controlled access. Any physical evidence must be filed in a locked filing cabinet as soon as practicable.

1.5 Responding to concerns when overseas

There are occasions when MCF staff or volunteers, associates or consultants acting on MCF's behalf are deployed overseas to support host countries develop safeguarding practices. MCF recognises its responsibility towards safeguarding children whilst abroad and will follow guidelines issued by the National Crime Agency, Guide to Reporting Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Outside of the UK (Appendix B); found at C:\Users\Marie Collins Foundation\MCF Policies\ Official Amber Alert – NGO Reporting. Any such referrals will also be logged on MCF systems.

1.6 Responding to concerns from a third party

Other professionals and members of the public should be advised that you will pass on child protection concerns to statutory agencies. Members of the public are entitled to report concerns anonymously directly to Children's Social Care or the police.

1.7 Confidentiality and young people's consent to information sharing

Confidentiality can never be a barrier to sharing safeguarding concerns. As we work with children and their families within the voluntary sector we are covered by the Information Commission Office as likely to have 'legitimate interest' to share safeguarding concerns.

1. 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.
2. Seek advice from the DSL, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned.
3. Share information with consent, where possible, however you may have to share information without consent if you are concerned for a child or vulnerable adults' welfare.

1.8 Working jointly with other agencies

The sharing of information amongst practitioners working with children is essential. In many cases it is only when information from a range of sources is put together that a child can be seen to be in need or at risk of harm. Therefore, it is the policy of MCF to appropriately share information and assist in assessments with statutory authorities.

1.9 Allegations against staff

The DSL will deal with safeguarding allegations against staff, in consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Where the allegations are against the CEO then staff need to report their concerns to the deputy DSL who will notify the Chair of the Trustee Board and will keep them updated on any investigation. Members of staff who are the subject of an allegation will be suspended immediately on full pay pending an investigation. During the period of suspension, the staff member will not come onto MCF premises unless specifically instructed and must not have any contact with young people or colleagues. During this time staff's devices will be retained and access to MCF files, emails or other records will be blocked.

Staff under investigation will be supported through their line manager. Allegations against staff will be robust and timely and will not cease even if the staff member resigns. MCF will not enter into a compromise agreement with any staff member and all investigations will continue to completion.

The DSL must inform the Chair of the Trustee Board regarding any allegations made against staff members.

2.0 SAFER RECRUITMENT

All staff, volunteers and MCF representatives are subject to safer recruitment. This includes

- A current DBS check (as per our disclosure and barring policy) at a level appropriate to their role
- The provision of two references covering the last five years of employment or study.
- Disclosure of previous convictions - failure to disclose convictions that are subsequently identified will result in that individual being disqualified from being part of the organisation or serving as a trustee.
- Asking prospective workers, volunteers and trustees if they are or have been subject to disciplinary procedures.

For general guidance the following principles will apply where staff do have convictions:

- All offences against a person or persons, and offences of fraud or theft will disqualify them from being employed or involved with the organisation (possible exception if offences committed under the age of 18).
- Other offences will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the CEO and Chair of the Trustee Board.

2.2 Supervision and Monitoring

Any staff member or MCF representative who fail to apply appropriate safeguarding measures in their practice will receive additional advice guidance and training through their line manager. Ongoing concerns regarding safeguarding practice, or a significant safeguarding failing, will be the subject of disciplinary procedures and their employment may be terminated.

2.3 Training and Staff Development

Staff and MCF representatives will receive regular safeguarding training.

2.4 Whistleblowing

Staff or MCF representatives may have concerns regarding current MCF personnel or organisational practice. In these cases, the person must highlight these concerns to the DSL. Further information on escalating concerns or poor practice can be found in the Whistle Blowing Policy.

3.0 ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

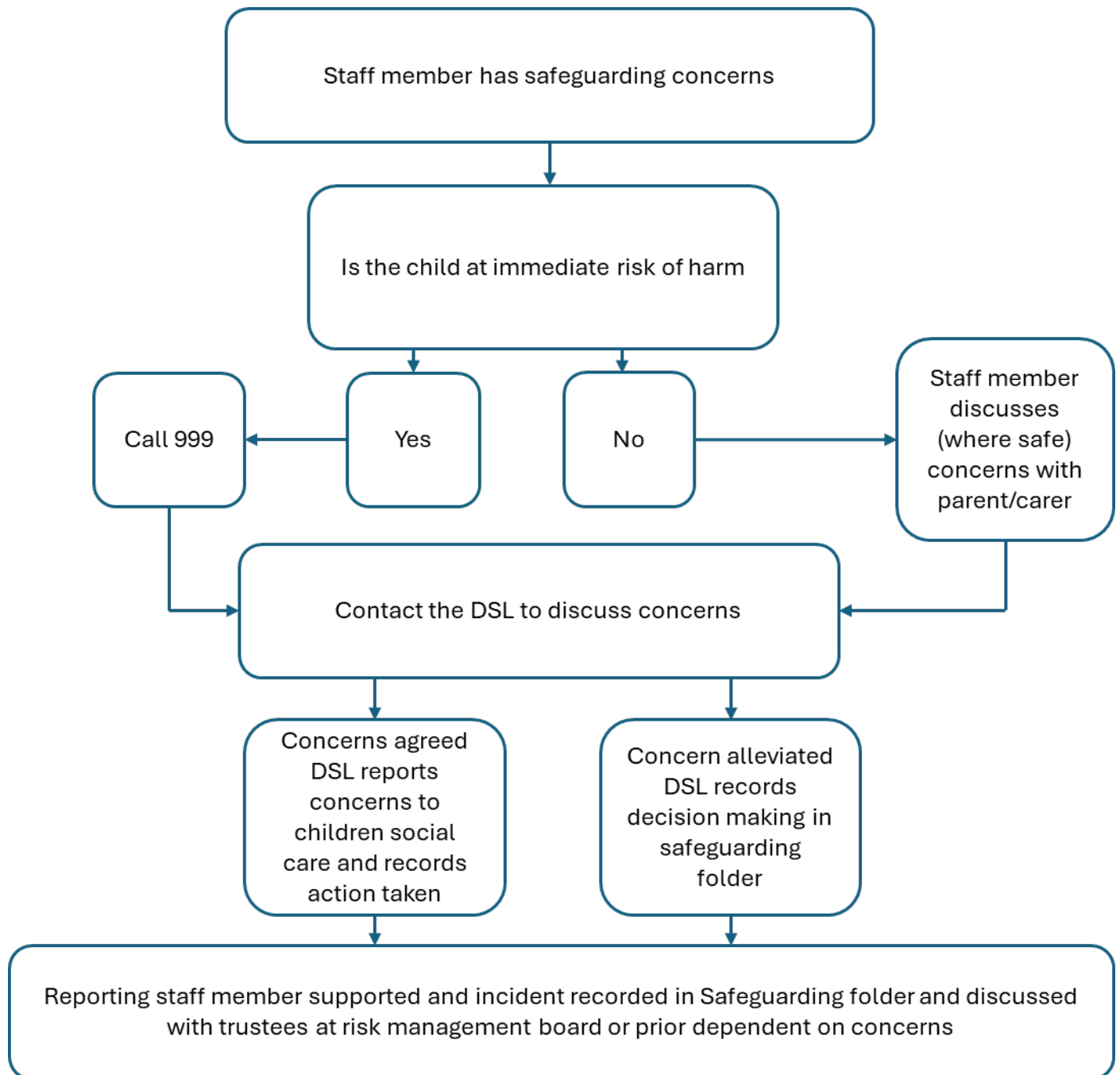
This policy will be provided in different formats, such as an accessible PDF, audio recording, large print or alternative languages on request.

4.0 RELATED POLICIES

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Case Management Policy
- Data Management and Privacy Policy
- DBS Policy, including Appendix 2, Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy
- IT Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Retention of Case Records Policy
- Performance Management Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Staff Handbook
- Whistleblowing Policy

APPENDIX 1: Responding to a safeguarding concern - Staff or MCF representatives must not investigate concerns



APPENDIX 2: Definitions of abuse

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. (WTSC 2023)

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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger • ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- provide suitable education
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. (WTSC 2023)

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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 maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone. (WTSC 2023)

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which 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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. (WTSC 2023)

If you have any concerns about the welfare of a child, you must discuss these concerns with the DSL.

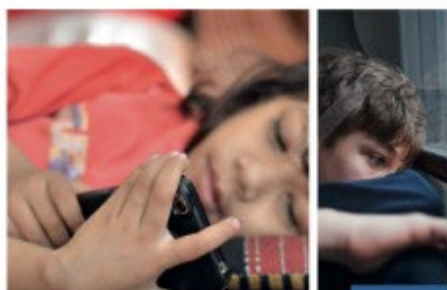
APPENDIX 3: Child-friendly Safeguarding Statement

HELP US TO KEEP YOU SAFE

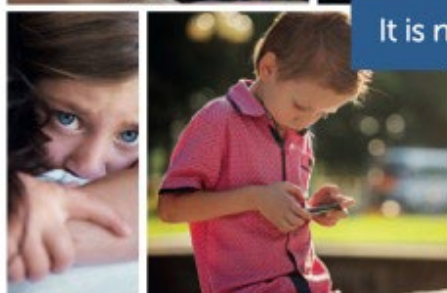
Marie Collins
Foundation wants
to make sure that
you are safe



People should never hurt you



Some people might hurt you.
This can happen anywhere
including on your mobile
phone, game console, tablet
or computer.



It is never your fault

if someone is hurting you

If something is worrying you or you are worried
about a friend you can tell us at the Marie Collins
Foundation or talk to a grown-up
you trust (like your parent or a teacher).
Email us at help@mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk,
or you can call Childline on 0800 11 11.



**Marie Collins
Foundation**

*Supporting recovery from
technology-assisted child
sexual abuse*

**If you are in danger NOW
call the police on 999**

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