



Safeguarding Children Policy

Manchester Deaf Centre Updated

February 2024

Policy No: 2
Date approved by Board of Trustees:
Date of next review: March 2025

Key Information:

Role	Name	Contact information
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mark Woodall	markwoodall@manchesterdeafcentre.com
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Claire Baldwin	clairebaldwin@manchesterdeafcentre.com
Nominated Trustee 1	Christine Wright	christinewright1004@gmail.com
Nominated Trustee 2	Bryony Parkes	bryony.c.parkes@gmail.com

Training	Who?	When?
Annual safeguarding one day refresher	All staff and volunteers	Every year
Induction training covers safeguarding procedure, leads and nominated trustees, safeguarding policy.	All new staff and volunteers	Within 1 month of starting employment/volunteering at MDC

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1. Policy Statement

- I. Manchester Deaf Centre aims to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people that access our services. Manchester Deaf Centre has adopted this safeguarding children policy and expects every adult working or helping at Manchester Deaf Centre to support it and comply with it. Consequently, this policy shall apply to all staff, managers, trustees, volunteers, students, or anyone working on behalf of Charity.
- II. Manchester Deaf Centre believes that no child or young person should experience abuse or harm and are committed to the protection of children and young people and this policy is intended to provide guidance and overarching principles to those who represent us as volunteers or staff, to guide our approach to child protection and safeguarding.
- III. We do this by:
 - Recognising that all children have the right to freedom from abuse and harm
 - Promoting joint working with parents and carers in the interest of children's welfare
 - Following safe recruitment procedures which ensure that staff are carefully selected, vetted, and have the relevant qualifications and experience.
 - Ensuring that all staff are aware of and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of children
 - Designating a Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (and a Deputy Safeguarding Lead – who will be responsible if the Safeguarding Lead is off work/on holiday) who takes specific responsibility for children's protection, safety and well-being.
 - Supporting all staff in bringing concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
 - Responding quickly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse
 - Providing parents, carers, and children with the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have. This includes having knowledge of, and ensuring children have access to their preferred methods of communication and that staff are trained in a variety of communication tools.
 - Adopting positive behaviour management strategies which are non-violent and do not impose humiliation.
 - Reviewing the effectiveness of the organisation's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
 - Working in partnership with external organisations and professionals to ensure that children are protected.

2. The Risks to Children

Possible harms that children need protection from include but are not limited to:

- Sexual abuse
- Grooming
- Physical and emotional abuse and neglect

- Domestic violence
- Inappropriate supervision by staff or volunteers
- Bullying, cyber bullying, acts of violence and aggression
- Victimisation
- Self-harm
- Unsafe environments and activities
- Crime
- Exploitation

3. Universality of Protection

Manchester Deaf Centre recognises that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount;
- all children regardless of race, gender, religious belief, disability, age, sexual orientation or identity have a right to equal protection from harm;
- some children are more vulnerable to harm as a result of their circumstances, prior experiences, communication needs or level of dependency; and
- working with children, young people, their parents and/or guardians, carers or other agencies is essential to protecting their wellbeing.

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- I. MDC has two trained members of staff who are DSL trained – currently Mark Woodall and Claire Baldwin – to ensure there is always appropriate cover for this role.
- II. The DSL and their Deputy (with close guidance and support from nominated trustees) are responsible for acting as a source of advice on child, young person and adults at risk safeguarding matters, for co-ordinating action at MDC, for liaising with relevant statutory agencies about suspected or actual cases of abuse and undertaking the following duties as per Children Act 1989, 2004 and Working Together 2015; Care Act 2014 and in accordance with the local Safeguarding Children Board:
 - establishing contact with the relevant statutory agencies and following local procedures;
 - providing information and advice on safeguarding within all MDC’s activities;
 - ensuring MDC’s safeguarding policy and procedures are followed and to inform the appropriate statutory agencies of relevant concerns;

- with respect to any safeguarding concerns, ensuring that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover Liaising with the statutory agencies;
- keeping relevant personnel at MDC informed about any action taken, with regards to safeguarding concerns they raised with the Designated Safeguarding Officer and any further action required on a strict need to know basis (in accordance with Information Sharing 2015 document). The Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulations 2018 allow for such sharing of information for the purposes of safeguarding of children/adults at risk;
- ensuring that an individual case record is maintained of the action taken by MDC, liaison with other agencies and the outcome, and kept securely in accordance with The Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection regulations 2018;
- advising the Board of safeguarding training needs.

5. Nominated Trustees for Safeguarding

- I. MDC has nominated Trustees – Christine Wright and Bryony Parkes – who are responsible for safeguarding and to champion good practice, to liaise with the DSLs and to provide information and reports to the Board on such matters.
- II. The nominated trustees will ensure that policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable staff members to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities. Where complaints are raised, the nominated trustees will assume safeguarding lead responsibility and liaise with the relevant people/authorities. If the complaint concerns the DSL or her/his deputy, the nominated trustees will assume safeguarding lead responsibility.

6. Responsibilities of Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees are collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within MDC's ethos and reflected in day-to-day practice.

7. Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers

- I. All staff members and volunteers must know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, how to respond to children and young people who disclose abuse and what to do if they are concerned about a child. This is delivered in MDC's annual safeguarding training and is always available in the policy for staff and volunteers to review. Before

commissioning freelance workers, MDC will ask for evidence they have completed safeguarding training within the last 12 months, as well as sight of their enhanced DBS check.

- II. All staff and volunteers should be aware of behaviours and physical signs linked to abuse. All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).
- III. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer-on-peer abuse. This may include, but not limited to bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults, harmful sexual behaviour, and *sexting*. Staff should recognise that children can abuse their peers.
- IV. Any concerns should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- V. All staff involved in MDC's provision of BSL and deaf awareness tuition must also have regard to the principles and practice set out in:
 - Manchester Adult Education's all staff summary: *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (copy filed in MDC's safeguarding folder on MDC Intranet); and
 - Statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education*:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

8. Safeguarding Children at Events/Activities

- I. There are three kinds of events/activities:
 - those open to adults and children of all ages;
 - those for children accompanied by a 'parent/guardian'; and
 - those for unaccompanied children, which are sometimes run alongside other events/activities.
- II. At events and activities open to all ages, children under 16 must be accompanied throughout by an adult over the age of 18 who not only brings the child but also takes the child home again afterwards. Young people aged 16 or 17 may attend unaccompanied if they bring the written consent and mobile telephone number of one of their parents.
- III. At events and activities for children accompanied by a 'parent/guardian', children under 16 must be supervised throughout the event by an adult over the age of 18 who not only brings the child to the event but also takes the child home again

afterwards. If a lone adult brings more than one child, then the children will have to stay together, so that the one adult can supervise them. Young people aged 16 or 17 may attend unaccompanied if they bring the written consent and mobile telephone number of one of their parents.

- IV. At events and activities for unaccompanied children, children under the age of 16 must be enrolled by a responsible adult before being left with the event leader. The enrolment must record the child's name, age and address and the names and addresses of the child's parents, plus the parents' mobile telephone numbers. Young people aged 16 or 17 may attend unaccompanied if they bring the written consent and mobile telephone number of one of their parents.
- V. Both events and activities are to be defined broadly to include any occasions where Manchester Deaf Centre will be providing a service.

9. Disclosure and Barring

I. Manchester Deaf Centre offers the following activities for children and young people:

- Sign and Play Group for 0–5s
- Youth Group for 6–11s
- Youth Group for 12–16s
- Youth Group for 17–24s

II. Our activities therefore require adult participants or adult leaders/volunteers to undergo DBS and/or police checks under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. The required level of checking will reflect the degree and frequency of unsupervised access given to other people's children. Each MDC job/role description will clearly state if a DBS check is required. The manager responsible for DBS checking is the CYPS Project Manager – currently Claire Baldwin.

III. Manchester Deaf Centre will take very seriously any allegation of impropriety on the part of any young member, volunteer, or staff at the Charity. A member of the Manchester Deaf Centre who discovers anything amiss should get in touch immediately with MDC's Senior Managers.

IV. Allegations will be appropriately reviewed and the likely future risk to children will be assessed. Investigations will be carried out in full accordance with the rules and procedures of Manchester Deaf Centre and the outcome communicated to those who need to know.

10. Health and Safety Aspects of Safeguarding Children

- I. Before starting any event for unaccompanied children, the Children and Young People's Lead Youth Worker will carry out a risk assessment and then take steps to minimise all risks to health and safety. This risk assessment will be reviewed and signed off by a Senior Manager. Parents and children will be made aware of any particular risks and of the steps to be taken to minimise those risks. The Lead Youth Worker will keep a record of all risk assessments.
- II. Sufficient adults must be present at any event for unaccompanied children to enable one adult to deal with any emergency while another adult supervises the children not directly affected by the emergency. The responsible adult: child ratio MDC uses is 1:10 if it is a centre-based activity, and 1:6 if it is an external trip. For the Sign and Play group (age range 0–5s), parents/guardians will also be present therefore the adult–child ratio will be higher.

11. Prevention of Bullying

We will not tolerate the bullying of children either by adults or by other children. If any incident of child-on-child bullying should arise at a Manchester Deaf Centre event, those involved will be separated immediately and the parents of the children involved will be asked to deal with the matter. The MDC's Senior Managers will review all incidents of child-on-child bullying and assess the likely future risk to children. If appropriate, the MDC's Senior Managers will consider banning a child from future events, but only in full accordance with the rules and procedures of the Charity. Allegations of adults bullying children will be dealt with in accordance with this Policy.

12. Photographing Children

No photos will be taken or published of any child attending an event or activity unless prior written permission is sought from a person with parental/guardian responsibility. If any person has any concerns regarding any person taking photos at an event or activity, that person should contact Manchester Deaf Centre immediately.

13. Managing Behaviour, Discipline and Acceptable Restraint

- I. Adults supervising children at the Manchester Deaf Centre events must never use any form of corporal punishment. If physical restraint is absolutely necessary to prevent injury to any person or to prevent serious damage to property, then the minimum necessary restraint may be used — but for that purpose only.

- II. Unacceptable behaviour at Manchester Deaf Centre events for unaccompanied children will generally be stopped by separating the children from each other and from the group. The miscreants will be suitably supervised and will be returned as soon as possible to the care of their parents.
- III. Manchester Deaf Centre may apply a further disciplinary sanction; namely the banning of the child from one or more future events over the following 18 months.
- IV. A parent who is aggrieved by this ban may appeal to Manchester Deaf Centre who will hear the views of all relevant persons. The decision of the Charity is then final. Any such appeals should be made to, and will be determined by, MDC's Senior Managers.
- V. Manchester Deaf Centre has a separate data protection policy. Any personal data relating to the managing of behavior including any disciplinary sanctions applied and any appeals relating to these will be safeguarded in line with our data protection policy.

14. Residential trips

- I. Currently MDC only provides the opportunity to join residential trips for deaf young people aged 18 and over. This policy will be reviewed and updated for under 18s should this change.
- II. It is likely for events that members will be required to share a room to save costs. Members will always have their own bed and must not share a bed with other members. Members of the opposite sex must not enter each other's bedrooms.
- III. Staff and volunteer DBS checks will be reviewed 7 days before the trip.
- IV. Sexualised and inappropriate behaviour during the trip will not be tolerated, for example, accessing or showing others pornographic material, or accessing online dating websites for the purpose of meeting strangers during the trip. This includes the sharing of 'live locations'.
- V. Social media updates will not be 'live' and will be shared after the group have left a location.
- VI. A reasonable curfew will be agreed, after which time the members should not leave their bedroom (unless it is to access a toilet) until the following morning. This is for their own and other members' safety.
- VII. Staff will have their own separate bedrooms but will be available to be contacted if there are any issues. During waking hours, members should text or video call staff members.

- VIII.** Overnight, a vibrating pager will be provided to members but should only be used in the case of emergency. MDC will ensure that the accommodation has deafaccessible fire/emergency equipment in place such as flashing lights.
- IX.** There will always be at least one female and one male member of staff. Only in the instance of extreme emergency (for example, someone has a heart attack or epileptic fit) will a staff member enter the opposite sex's bedroom to assist with lifesaving treatment and contacting emergency services.
- X.** MDC is fully inclusive of all members, including transgender people. Where full gender reassignment surgery has taken place, members who are transgender will share a bedroom with the gender they now identify as. If full gender reassignment has not taken place, the member will be required to share a room with those assigned the same sex as them at birth. If they would prefer, they will be provided with their own bedroom. For non-binary members, they will be offered a space in the bedroom with members identifying as the same sex they were assigned at birth.
- XI.** MDC understands that as young adults, members may wish to have their own free time for exploring new places we may visit. However, for safeguarding purposes, during residential trips MDC will ensure that members are always with at least two members of staff. This is to protect against issues such as becoming lost, injuries and encountering a member of the public who poses a risk.
- XII.** As with events, members will be asked not to drink alcohol during the trip due to its ability to impair judgement. Staff will not drink alcohol at any time during the trip.
- XIII.** Information regarding safeguarding will be clearly communicated to members before they book their place, and they will sign to say they agree to the rules before their place is booked.
- XIV.** If safeguarding measures are not followed by members during the trip, it is likely they will be refused the opportunity to attend future trips. In extreme circumstances, their emergency contact may be contacted to collect them to take them home.

15. Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- General Data Protection Regulation
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Act 2004

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work 2017
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (Department of Education, 2015)
- Working together to safeguard children (Department for Education, 2018)

This Policy is approved and robustly endorsed by Manchester Deaf Centre and is due for review annually.

16. Resources

Useful resources for working with children and young people can be found on the NSPCC website: www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/

These include:

- standards for organisations to implement and a self-assessment tool kit <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-checklist/>
- advice on recruiting and managing staff and volunteers, including preemployment/engagement checks
- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/safer-recruitment/>
- information and resources to support organisations to manage concerns raised about unacceptable or unsafe conduct by staff and volunteers towards other colleagues or children <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/managingallegations-of-abuse/>

The following guidance is also relevant:

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Information sharing: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharingadvice>

What to do if you're worried about a child:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf

