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**MTM Youth Services CIC**

**SAFEGUARDING and CHILD PROTECTION POLICY and PROCEDURES**

**Aim**

The purpose of MTM Youth Services CIC’s Safeguarding policy is to ensure that all children and young people involved in our projects are safe and protected from harm.

MTM is committed to:

* Providing protection for children and young people from maltreatment
* Ensuring good health and development
* Ensuring that children and young people are always in safe care
* Taking action with young people so that they have the best outcomes.

The aim of the MTM Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice and give clear direction to all staff, workers, partners, volunteers, visitors, parents/carers, children and young people about the expected behaviour and legal responsibilities towards safeguarding and the promotion of welfare.

**Introduction**

MTM understands the contribution it can make to ensuring that children and young people are protected from harm, as well as supporting and promoting the welfare of all children.

MTM’s policy applies to all staff, workers, volunteers, visitors, parents/carers, children and young people. Where MTM works in partnership with another agency, each staff member will adhere to their own policy.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

**Our Ethos**

MTM creates environments where children and young people feel important, safe and listened to. Children and young people are encouraged to talk about things that matter to them, including where they have concerns.

MTM’s work includes providing opportunities and activities that develop skills and confidence in children and young people, so that they know how to recognise risk and stay safe.

All staff, workers, volunteers and regular visitors know how to recognise a disclosure, and what to do next. MTM will not make any promises, nor keep any secrets. Any child or young person, who makes a disclosure, will understand what happens next.

We will use our positive working relationships to ensure effective partnerships with parents, carers and other supporting professionals.

**SAFER Recruitment**

All adults who come into contact with our children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our children are competent, confident and safe to do so.

We ensure we adhere to the principles of Safer Recruitment as per our policy and also the guidance from Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board: We ensure that we:

* Carefully consider the job description and person specification
* Circulate all vacancies widely
* Prepare an information pack
* Ask for a written application form
* Define our selection criteria
* Ask for a written declaration with regards to criminal convictions, spent or otherwise
* Ask for identification
* Ask for originals of any qualifications
* Conduct interviews with at least two people present
* Ask for at least two references, including the last employer
* Gain enhanced DBS checks where current Government guidance requires us to
* Organise a comprehensive induction period which includes familiarisation with our safeguarding policies, procedures, and safeguarding training through the Safer Programme

**General Procedures**

When new workers, volunteers or regular visitors join MTM, they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of this policy, amongst others, as well as talking through the specific arrangements for their particular delivery. A ‘Project Summary Sheet’ will detail all relevant procedures for their project. They will be given all the necessary paperwork, along with instructions on how to complete it, and who to pass it to.

All staff, workers and volunteers will receive an induction within 3 months of when they start with MTM. This programme will include time with one of the directors of MTM, safeguarding training, and other specific training for the role if necessary. Safeguarding training will be through the Safer Programme. Where possible workers will be viewed on their first interaction with children or young people.

All staff, workers and volunteers will sign to say that they have read and understood this policy at the time of review.

This Safeguarding Policy will be distributed to all staff, workers and volunteers at least annually, to ensure regular promotion of it and the required procedures.

Our policy is available on the MTM website for all people to access including staff, workers, volunteers, funders, parents and carers. The policy will also be promoted annually via social media.

Young people and staff/volunteers on our projects will create and agree to a code of conduct for each project they are involved with. This code of conduct will include issues and matters relating to Safeguarding and safety, confidentiality where appropriate, plus procedures for First Aid, Fire Evacuation, housekeeping, standards of behaviour and conduct, respect for each other, acceptable language, smoking/vaping, etc

**Mobile Phones, Other Devices and Photography**

MTM Youth Work projects promote a ‘culture of safety’ in which young people and workers are protected from abuse, harm, and distress. We have a clear policy on the acceptable use of **mobile phones and other devices** that is understood and adhered to by everyone, and is discussed with service users as part of the project Ground Rules.

Abiding by the terms of the mobile phone ground rule ensures that we:

* Protect young people from harm and abuse
* Prevent workers from being subject to false allegations
* Help workers remain focused on the care of young people
* Work in an open and transparent environment.

**Young people’s use of mobile phones or other devices**

Whilst we understand that many young people have mobile phones, we actively discourage them from using their phones at the session.

MTM Youth Services does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to mobile phones brought to the session by the young people.

Young people must not use their mobile phone to take photographs or recordings of any kind whilst at the session.

If they want a photograph of a particular activity, they can ask a youth worker.

**Visitors’ use of mobile phones**

Parents and all other visitors must not use their mobile phone or any other device - to take photographs at the session. This includes taking photographs of their own young people.

**Use of Photography**

Extract from the MTM Consent Form completed by parent/carer:

“During the course of the project there may be opportunities to publicise some of the activities that the young people are involved in. This may well involve filming or photographing young people for use in the local media; we welcome these opportunities and hope that you do too. There may also be occasions when we arrange photography for our own purposes, such as displays, our website and publicity brochures. Photography or filming will only take place with the **permission** of each young person’s Lead Youth Worker and under their supervision. When filming or photography is carried out by the news media, which will only be authorised by the Lead Youth Worker, young people will only be named if there is a particular reason to do so (e.g. they have completed a specific activity or achieved an award). Home addresses will never be given out. There may be other circumstances, falling outside the normal day to day activities of MTM Youth Services CIC, in which pictures of young people are requested. The Lead Youth Worker recognises that in such circumstances specific consent from parent or guardian will be required before they can permit photography or filming of young people. All photographs will be destroyed securely either electronically or by means of shredding one year after the Activity has finished. If you would like disposal to take place before one year has passed please contact us and we will action your request.”

**Training**

In addition to preselection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

* Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is not likely to result in allegations being made.
* Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns immediately about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
* Review their practice in relation to the MTM Safeguarding Policy – and feedback if the policy is not fit for purpose
* Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
* Work safely and effectively with children.

Every member of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training through the NSCB Safer Programme every three years.

We actively encourage all of our staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance. This can be accessed via [www.norfolklscb.org](http://www.norfolklscb.org)

We ensure that all staff are aware of any changes to policy, and they have to sign to say that they have read and understood this. Safeguarding is discussed at supervision, and at project meetings.

MTM holds an annual staff meeting which includes Safeguarding and Child Protection.

**Safer Staff and Volunteers**

MTM recognises the legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on our behalf are competent, confident and safe to do so. MTM takes all reasonable steps to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Preselection checks must include the following:

* All volunteers/staff complete a ‘Youth Worker Enquiry Form’.
* A Disclosure and Barring Service Check is made
* Two confidential references, including one regarding previous and recent work with children and young people. These references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
* Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo preferred).

All staff and volunteers will undergo an interview carried out by at least one MTM Director and one other member of that project delivery. Young people will also be involved with recruitment, and:

* A check will be made that the ‘Youth Worker Enquiry Form’ has been completed in full
* Their qualifications will be substantiated.
* The project requirements and worker responsibilities will be clarified.

All youth workers will receive an induction within 3 months, during which:

* The requirements and responsibilities of the worker and MTM will be clarified.
* Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.
* They sign up to the organisation’s policies, including Child Protection.

There may be occasion where a young person moves into a volunteering role within an MTM Youth Work project. These young people will have specific tasks to undertake, and will be called Young Helpers. These young people will not be placed in a position of trust, nor be unsupervised.

**Concerns about someone working/volunteering with children**

Allegations Against Persons who work with Children, Protocol 8.3 needs to be read, when making a referral to Norfolk LADO service.

<https://norfolklscp.org.uk/about/policies-procedures/safer-workforce/83-allegations-against-persons-who-workvolunteer-with-children>

Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2022, also gives information about Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, which places duties on a range of organisations and individuals in relation to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

All allegations of abuse of children by those who work with children must be taken seriously.

**Definitions**

* A child is anyone under the age of 18.
* An employee (person) is anyone working with children, be it in an employed (all sectors and settings) or voluntary capacity.
* An employer is anyone working with or providing services to children (all sectors and settings)

**An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has**:

* behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child:
* possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child:
* behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

**Timescales**

* Any allegation against a person who works with children should be reported immediately to a senior manager within the organisation.
* The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer’s attention or that are made directly to the police.

**The Role of the LADO**

The role of the LADO is to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people who work with children. They are not responsible for undertaking investigations. They can provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations. Please note:

* Incidents where one child harms another child, or a parent who does not work with children harms their own children **do not** need to be reported to the LADO Service, these need to referred directly to the Children’s Advice and Duty Service (CADS) on **0344 800 8021**
* Norfolk LADO service **do not** deal with allegations re bullying, unless there is clear evidence that it is by an adult working with children.
* Parental complaints need to go through the organisational complaints process, initially raising the complaint with the Head teacher/ Manager of the setting in the first instance.
* General dissatisfaction with a school/setting/team or individual needs to go through the settings complaints process.

**Next Steps**

Fill in a **referral/consultation form** if you want advice if the behaviour you are reporting meets the LADO criteria or you are unsure. Sometimes behaviours may concern you and make you wonder whether someone is suitable to work with children i.e. there has been a pattern of inappropriate behaviour that has been addressed via disciplinary procedures but the behaviour continues to occur.

For both forms please ensure you give as much detail as possible so we are able to make an informed decision on the way forward.

Once the LADO Referral/Consultation form has been completed, it needs to be returned to LADO@norfolk.gov.uk where it will be read by the duty LADO who will then respond with the appropriate advice and information.

MTM will take any allegation seriously and will seek advice from the LADO with 24 hours of the allegation being made. We will not investigate these matters.

**Records and Confidentiality**

All staff, workers and volunteers will agree to, and sign, the MTM Confidentiality Agreement during their induction when they start with MTM.

We will record all concerns about a young person’s welfare on MTM’s report form, and then give this to the Designated Child Protection Officer as soon as possible. They will store this information in secure way at MTM’s office address. Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information will be handled and disseminated on a **need to know** basis only. Paperwork and records will be disposed of securely following the MTM Disposal of Records Policy.

All information is confidential, however if there is a safeguarding or child protection concern about a child, then information can be shared with other agencies, namely the Police or Children’s Services.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Lead Worker or Designated Child Protection Officer will liaise with Children’s Services and other agencies as appropriate. Safeguarding will form part of the supervision offered to Lead Workers.**

MTM Lead Workers and other workers must always contact the MTM designated person. However, when working on school premises, their named designated person must be contacted first by the MTM Lead Worker.

**Procedures for Handling Disclosures**

A child or young person may decide to disclose information that may indicate they are suffering from abuse or neglect. A child chooses to speak to an adult because they feel that they will listen and that they can trust them. The adult needs to listen to what is being said, and be very careful not to ‘lead’ the child or influence in any way what they say.

It is important that the adult remembers to:

* Stay calm
* Listen and be supportive
* Not ask any leading questions, interrogate, or put ideas in the child or your person’s head, or jump to conclusions
* Not stop or interrupt a child or young person who is recalling significant events
* Never promise confidentiality – it must be explained that information will need be to be passed on to help keep them safe
* Avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator
* Tell the child or young person what must be done next (the safeguarding process must be followed)
* Record what was said immediately as close to what was said as possible. Also record what was happening immediately before the child or young person disclosed. Be sure to sign and date the record in ink.
* Contact the designated person immediately – MTM workers must always contact the MTM designated person. However, when working on school premises, the school’s named designated person must be contacted first by the MTM lead Worker.
* Seek support

We are clear that the Local Authority and Police must lead any investigation in to any allegation regarding safeguarding, and that it is not up to MTM to make any decisions regarding this issue.

If you have a concern about a child or children you will need to telephone the Children’s Advice and Duty Service (CADS) on **0344 800 8021** immediately.  You will be put through to a Social Worker who will take all of the relevant details.  You will need to make sure you are prepared with full details of the child and family, plus what your concerns are, details of any support you have provided to the child/family and what you would like to happen.  You will need to ensure you gain consent from the parent/carer unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm or undermine a criminal investigation. If you have not sought consent from the parent/carer you need to inform the CADS worker of this and the reason for this.

The CADS worker will agree a way forward with you and keep you informed.  They will send you a written record of your conversation within 5 working days.  The outcomes could include a full referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for further investigation, the Police, or for work with Early Help.  You will not investigate and will be led by the Local Authority and/or the Police.

You will need to make careful records of all conversations, in ink, including the dates and times of who you spoke to, the information shared and the action agreed.  You do not need to send a written referral.

Full details on this process can be found at [www.norfolklscb.org](http://www.norfolklscb.org) under ‘How to Raise a Concern’.

If you are unhappy about a decision made by CADS or MASH you can use the Resolving Professional Disagreements policy on [www.norfolklscb.org](http://www.norfolklscb.org) and contact the Safer Programme for more advice on this process.

If you have any questions about this please do get in contact with CADS and they’ll happily explain the procedure to you.  Full details are available on their website.

For specialist Police advice, contact the Duty Detective Sergeant within the MASH.

Email: MASHSupervisors@norfolk.pnn.police.uk

Telephone Direct dial 01603 27(6151)

Any concern, referral or consultation with the MASH or Police must take place immediately, it is important we do not delay.

**Working Together 2022**

**What is abuse and neglect?**

**A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child 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 others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.**

**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.**

**Emotional abuse**

**The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as 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.**

**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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.**

**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 as a result 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 care-givers); or**
* **ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.**

**It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.**

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children**

**Defined for the purposes of this guidance as:**

* **protecting children from maltreatment;**
* **preventing impairment of children’s health or development;**
* **ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and**
* **taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.**

**Child protection**

**Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.**

**Relevant Guidance and Legislation**

* **Working Together 2022**
* **What to do if You’re Worried a Child is Being Abused 2015**
* **Children Act 2004**
* **Children Act 1989**
* **Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families**

**Other Relevant MTM Policies**

* **Health and Safety**
* **Whistleblowing**
* **Lone Working**
* **Data Protection**
* **Confidentiality Agreement**
* **Online Communities and Social Media**
* **Recruitment and DBS**
* **Employee and Service User Complaints**
* **Equality and Diversity**

**Useful Contacts**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Children’s Advice and Duty Service (CADS) | **0344 800 8021** **or 0344 800 8020 (out of hours)** |
| **Norfolk Police** | **101** |
| **In an emergency** | **999** |
| **Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) Team*****normal working hours*** | **01603 223473** |
| **Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB)** | [www.norfolklscb.org](http://www.norfolklscb.org) |
| **Safer Programme** | **01603 228966** |
| **South Norfolk Early Help Hub (for SN Projects)** | **01508 533933** |

**Named Designated Child Protection Officer**

**The following designated staff are in post for MTM:**

**Designated Officer: Sam Mason**

**Telephone Number: 07778 896325**

**Deputy Designated Officer: Harry Town**

**Telephone Number: 07715 336885**

**If you are delivering a partnership project, e.g. in a school, or with another agency, please consult your project sheet for further details.**

**Policy Review**

**We will always make any changes immediately to our procedures in line with Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board’s Guidance on** [www.norfolklscb.org](http://www.norfolklscb.org)

**This policy will be reviewed at least annually****.**

**Signed**

**Name**

**Position**

**Date**

Reviewed by the Directors 27th November 2023