

Safeguarding Children and Young People in MBDVH **Policy and Procedures**

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In Consultation With MBDVH Management Committee

Date Agreed	Name	Position
December 2016		
Reviewed 17/5/18	Ray Moorcroft	Chair
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1 Introduction

What is the difference between Safeguarding and Child Protection?

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's and learners' health or development
- ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- acting to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child Protection is a part of Safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

There are four main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring organisations who use the Hall practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children;
- Raising awareness of safeguarding children and child protection
- Ensuring organisations that use the Hall have developed and are implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse;
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

1.1 Hall Commitment

- The Hall is committed to creating and maintaining a safe learning environment for children and young people through all Trustees and Volunteers helping organisations to identify possible child welfare concerns and acting to address them, in partnership with families and other agencies. A 'Standard' Policy is available for each User. This policy reflects the policies of Cheshire West Safeguarding Children Board
<http://www.cheshirewestlscb.org.uk/>
and is in line with "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (2015)
<http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/>
- Where the VH committee transfers control or otherwise allows the use of Hall premises to external bodies (such as sports clubs) or service providers during or out of Hall hours, we will ensure that these bodies or providers have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to co-ordinate with the Hall on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the bodies or providers.
- The Hall will also contribute by providing a safe environment.

To create this safe environment the Hall has certain statutory duties and responsibilities set out within the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974.

These duties are listed below:

1.2 Duties

To provide a safe environment the Hall committee and Users will:

- Promote user/participant health and safety;
- Promote safe practice and challenge unsafe practice in line with procedure;
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements are in place and embedded in the usage of the Hall;
- Ensure that all members of the Hall community have appropriate safeguards and supports in place should they choose to raise safeguarding issues, however unusual or sensitive these may be;
- Cultivate an ethos within the Hall community where all adults feel comfortable and supported to draw safeguarding issues to the attention of the Organiser and/or the Designated Safeguarding Person and can pose safeguarding questions with “respectful uncertainty” as part of their shared responsibility to safeguard children;
- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk without coercion and are listened to;
- Ensure children know that if they are worried they can talk to adults in the Hall;
- Take all reasonable measures to ensure risks of harm to children’s welfare are minimised;
- Take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, working to local policies and procedures in full working partnership with families and agencies as far as possible;
- Ensure that procedures are in place to deal with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers by referring to the Education example:
 - *HM Government Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2016, Part 4: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff* (also set out within the Local Interagency Procedures)
- Maximise Hall security;
- Tackle drugs and substance misuse;
- Work with all agencies regarding missing children, anti-social behaviour/gang activity, child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism, and violence/knife crime in the community.

2 Responsibilities

The Hall will identify harm and maintain safety by:

- Everybody having a duty to safeguard children inside and outside the Hall
- Providing advice/guidance regarding access to safeguarding policies and procedures
- Taking appropriate actions to address concerns about a child’s welfare in partnership with other organisations and safeguarding agencies;

Our Hall will ensure that user/participants are made aware that information can be found by asking Hall staff.

2.1 The roles and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Person

Each User will have responsibility for this role and ensuring that they have received appropriate training and are supported in their role. The Responsibilities and Appropriate Actions are set out in the ‘Standard’ Policy.

2.2 Raising Awareness

The Committee will ensure that the Hall’s Safeguarding Policy is updated and reviewed annually, taking into consideration safeguarding advice and guidance issued by Cheshire West Safeguarding Children’s Board.

All committee members and volunteers, especially new members, will receive:

- Notification about the Hall’s safeguarding and protection policy (online).
- Have an overview of the Hall’s approach and values regarding safeguarding and protection
 - know that they must report any concerns immediately they arise and to whom
 - understand confidentiality issues.

3 Roles and Responsibilities of the User/Organiser

The User/Organiser will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the Hall Committee are fully implemented and followed by all participating adults, so that everyone knows what to do if concerned about a child;
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies;
- They personally, along with other senior leaders undertake safer recruitment training to comply with the statutory requirement to have a trained person on every recruitment panel.

4 Roles and Responsibilities of the Village Hall Committee

The Committee is collectively responsible for the Hall's safeguarding arrangements. Ideally, a few VH committee members will undertake the Basic Awareness Safeguarding training.

Allegations of abuse made against the User/Organiser are reported to any member of the VH committee and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The VH committee will ensure that:

- Safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the Hall's ethos and reflected in the Hall's safeguarding practices;
- The Hall has effective policies and procedures in place in accordance with this policy, and the Hall's compliance with them is monitored;
- There are policies and procedures in place for dealing with complaints and/or allegations against Users/ Organisers
- Users, volunteers and other regular visitors to the Hall who work with children are made aware of the Hall's arrangements for safeguarding and their responsibilities.

5 Identifying Concerns

User/Organiser/Committee Member Adults in the Hall are well placed to observe any physical signs which indicate that a child may be suffering significant harm. The relationships between staff, user/participants, parents and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or Hall staff being alerted to concerns.

Definitions:

The Definitions used in the Policy and Procedures Documents are set out in the 'Standard' Policy.

6. SAFEGUARDING USER/PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE VULNERABLE TO EXTREMISM,

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

MBDVH values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both user/participants and Committee Members have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community

cohesion.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. MBDVH is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in the Standard Document.

MBDVH seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

The Hall Committee members will assess the level of risk within the Hall and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment includes consideration of the Hall's premises by external agencies, and other issues specific to the Hall's profile, community and philosophy.

This risk assessment will be reviewed as part of the annual Risk Assessment Exercise.

Our Hall, like all others, is required to identify a Prevent **Single Point of Contact** (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism (this will normally be the Chair). The responsibilities of the SPOC are described in the Standard Document.

When any Committee Member has concerns that a user/participant may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the SPOC.

Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason, the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, for example they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

SAFEGUARDING USER/PARTICIPANTS/STUDENTS WHO ARE VULNERABLE TO EXPLOITATION, FORCED MARRIAGE, HONOUR BASED VIOLENCE, FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION, OR TRAFFICKING

Our safeguarding policy, through the Hall's values, ethos and behaviour policies, provides the basic platform to ensure children and young people are given the support to respect themselves and others, stand up for themselves and protect each other.

Our Hall keeps itself up to date on the latest advice and guidance provided to assist in addressing specific vulnerabilities and forms of exploitation. Sources of Guidance/Information are set out in the Standard Document.

7 Disclosure

All members of staff, volunteers and VH committee members must know how to respond to a user/participant who discloses abuse, and they must be familiar with procedures to be followed – which are set out in the Standard Document.

8 Records and Monitoring

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 to ensure that information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- secure.

Safeguarding records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that users and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any Committee Member receives a request from a user/participant or parent to see child protection records, they should refer the request to the Chair.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent Hall staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

Any concerns about a child will be recorded in writing within 24 hours. All records must provide a factual, evidence-based account. Accurate recording of actions should be made. Records will be signed, dated and where appropriate witnessed.

Hard copies of records or reports relating to Safeguarding concerns will be kept in a separate, confidential file, securely stored away from the main user/participant file in the E-record. Authorisation to access these electronic records will be controlled by the Chair.

Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly. Original notes will be retained as evidence if there are criminal proceedings arising from current or historical allegations of abuse or neglect or civil actions.

9 Supporting children

Some children may have an increased risk of harm. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our user/participants receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to certain children: these categories are listed in the Standard Document.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The Hall may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at Hall their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The Hall will endeavour to support the user/participant through:

- A Hall ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives user/participants a sense of being valued;
- Liaison with other agencies that support the user/participant, such as Children's Social Care, Youth Offending service and Education Psychology Service;
- Raising awareness to the Hall's involvement with Cheshire Police.

10 Recruitment

The Hall pays full regard to DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2016. We ensure, through our Users, that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in, or uses the Hall

who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult, including volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Exemplar Safer Recruitment Practice is set out in the Standard Document.

11 Volunteers

We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children; for this reason, any volunteers in the Hall, in whatever capacity, are expected to follow the policies and procedures in the same way as all users.

12 Safe Staff

The Hall requires checks to be undertaken corresponding to Safer Recruitment procedures on all adults working in the Hall to establish their suitability to work with children.

All Hall Committee Members will take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for work with individual children or parents to be conducted with or in view of other adults.

If an allegation is made against another Committee Member, s/he will immediately inform the Chair, who will then consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer.

13 Conduct of Staff

"Absolutely without fail- challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong"

"Sounding the Alarm" – Barnardos)

The Hall has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between adult users and children, and that all adult users are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

All adults should be aware of the dangers inherent in:

- Working alone with a child;
- Physical interventions;
- Cultural and gender stereotyping;
- Dealing with sensitive information;
- Giving to, and receiving gifts from, children and parents;
- Contacting children through private telephones (including texting), e-mail, MSN, or social networking websites;
- Disclosing personal details inappropriately;
- Meeting user/participants outside Hall hours or Hall duties;
- Making inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to one attention beyond the normal requirements of the role; or inappropriate sharing of images

Further Guidance is available in the Standard Document.

13.1 Allegations

Guidance regarding the procedure for handling Allegations is set out in the Standard Document.

14 Photographing Children

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. We acknowledge, however, that some people abuse children through taking, using or circulating images. The following GENERAL guidelines are complemented by the more complete guidance set out in the Standard Document.

Users and Volunteers

- Parental consent will be sought (annually in writing) and permissions noted.
- Users and volunteers must seek the authorisation of the Organiser prior to taking photographs/ videos of children
- The use of cameras on mobile phones or the downloading of images onto any internet site is forbidden
- Only the user/participant's first name will be used with an image
- It will be ensured that user/participants are appropriately dressed before images are taken
- User/participants are encouraged to tell us if they are worried or unsure about any photographs that are taken of them.

The Guidance for Safer working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People provides detailed guidance on the taking of photographs and storage of images – refer Standard Document.

Parents or Members of the Public

We understand that parents like to take photos of or video record their children in the Hall production, or at events in the Hall, such as birthdays. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes. However, if there are Health and Safety issues associated with this (e.g. the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, causing an accident), we will encourage parents to use film or settings on their camera that do not require flash.

Users will not allow other people, including staff, to photograph or film user/participants during a Hall activity without parental permission. This includes the use of cameras on mobile phones or any other device. We will not allow images of user/participants to be used on Hall websites, publicity, or press releases, including social networking sites, without express permission from the parent, and if we do obtain such permission, we will not identify individual children by name.

The Hall cannot, however, be held accountable for the use of photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at Hall functions where parental permission has been given.

16 Complaints and Compliments

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a user/participant or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a child/vulnerable adult that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include physical bullying or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by the User in the first instance and only if unresolved and if appropriate, then referred to the Chair.

17 Links to other Hall policies

This Policy will be read in conjunction with other policies regarding the safety and welfare of Users/Participants. Together these make up the suite of policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this Hall. First Aid, Health and Safety Policy, Cheshire West LSCB Safeguarding procedures.