



Safeguarding Policy and Procedures: Children and Young People

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly young people, children and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm of which The Masonic Charitable Foundation becomes aware.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers and should be read alongside the “Safeguarding Policy and Procedures: Adults at Risk”

What is Safeguarding?

According to Working Together 2018, safeguarding children is defined as:

- **Protecting children from maltreatment:** Protecting children from harm, abuse and neglect.
- **Preventing impairment of children’s health or development:** Ensuring children have access to the care and support they need.
- **Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care:** Enabling safe and effective parenting.
- **Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes:** Giving children equal opportunities in life.

What is child protection?

Child Protection is part of safeguarding process, protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes the child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

The Masonic Charitable Foundation believes that everyone has 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. This is in line with the Children Act 1989, Working Together 2018 and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

We will make sure that all children and young people have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. We recognise that some children are more vulnerable to harm (e.g. children with disabilities and communication impairments).

What we will do

The Masonic Charitable Foundation will demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding children and young people by:

- Listening to children and respecting them
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Writing safeguarding and child protection procedures
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that all staff and volunteers follow the safeguarding procedures.

Who is defined as a child?

In England and Wales, a child is defined as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. Children therefore means 'children and young people' throughout this policy.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse occurs when children are hurt physically, emotionally, sexually or in some other way. Children can be abused in any section of society. Abuse occurs within all cultural, ethnic and religious communities. Children may be abused by family or friends, by professionals who are in a caring role, by other children or by strangers. All forms of abuse are wrong and will not be tolerated by the Foundation.

What do we mean by child abuse?

Physical abuse may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be caused when an individual fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs and is likely to seriously harm the child's health or development. Examples of neglect include:

- Failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Not protecting a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Not ensuring adequate supervision (including the use of adequate care givers)
- Failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Not being responsive to a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. It may take place in the real world or online. The activities may involve using sexually explicit language, physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, for example, involving children in looking at sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Sexual behaviour between children is considered harmful if one of the children is much older or one is pre-pubescent and the other isn't.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child to cause negative effects on the child's emotional development. This can include degrading punishments, threats, and withholding love and affection, which can undermine a child or young person's confidence.

Domestic abuse includes physical, emotional, sexual, financial or psychological abuse between people in a relationship. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse.

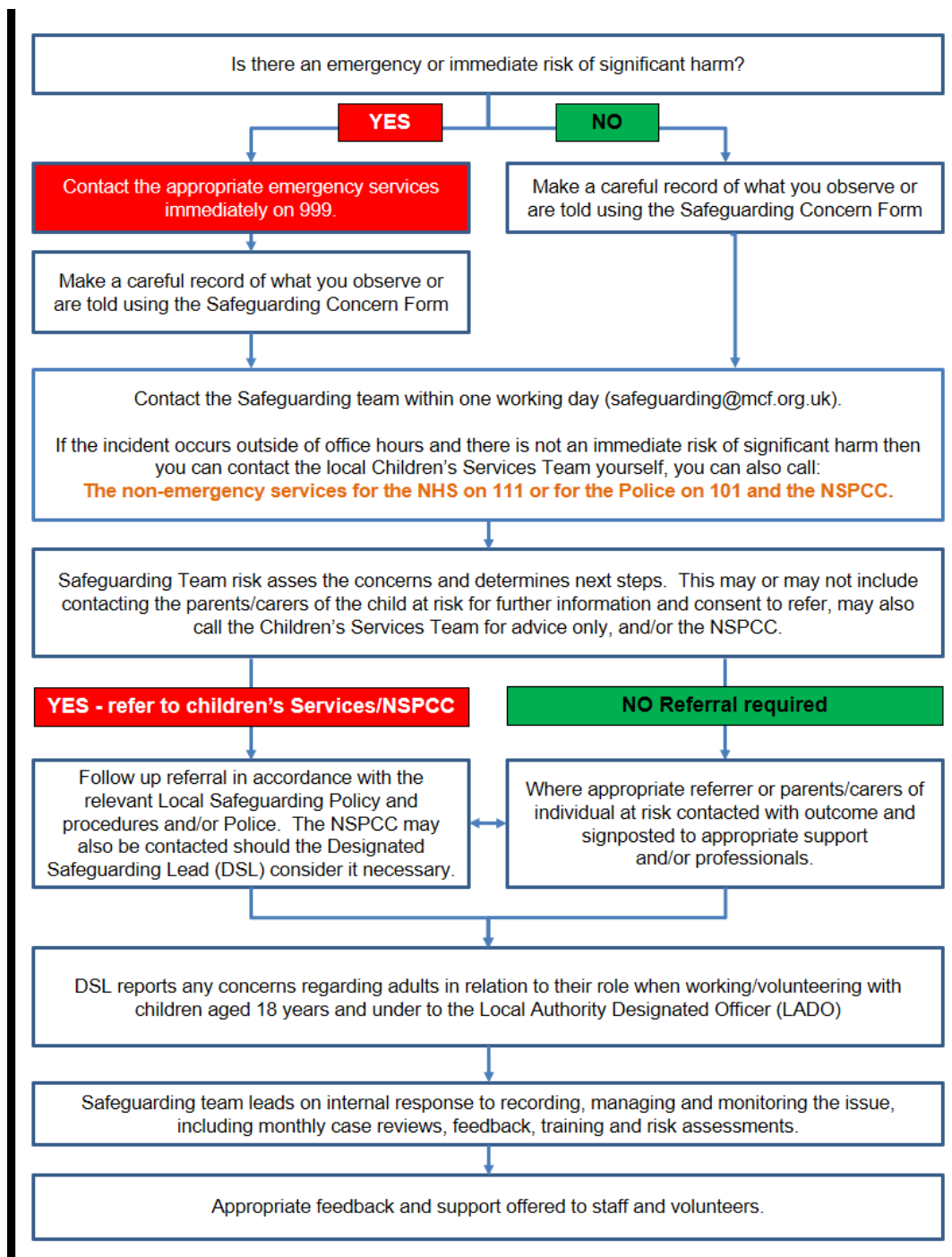
Bullying and cyberbullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It usually happens over a lengthy period of time and can harm a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online.

Child trafficking involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited. Many children are trafficked into the UK from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another. Modern slavery is another term which may be used in relation to child trafficking. Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking.

Female genital mutilation is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse and a criminal offence.

What to do if you suspect a child is being abused

If you are concerned that a child is suffering harm, has suffered harm, or is likely to suffer harm from another person, then you have a responsibility to report your concerns immediately in accordance with the following procedure.



It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (“DSL”) to ensure that these procedures are rigorously adhered to. If the allegation concerns the DSL, the Designated Safeguarding Officer should be informed. In the exceptional circumstances that both are involved, it is the duty of the person concerned to directly contact social care.

Response

If a serious event, whether actual or alleged, takes place which involves the Foundation then it is the duty of the Trustees to inform the Charity Commission.

If anyone is concerned the Foundation is not managing safeguarding concerns appropriately they can refer directly to the police or Social Care services.

Any staff reporting concerns, or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels will be protected by the Foundation’s Whistleblowing Policy.

The Foundation will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff and volunteers found in breach of this policy.

Safer recruitment

The Foundation will recruit using appropriate procedures, safeguards and checks.

The Assistant Director of Human Resources will be responsible for monitoring this.

All roles will have a written job description. Where appropriate and proportionate, the recruitment process will include an interview stage. At interview the Foundation has procedures and recording to ensure it is satisfied, and can evidence that the applicant is appropriate for the role.

The Foundation will take up two written references for all paid posts and volunteer roles prior to appointment. Where the role is eligible we will use Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks at the appropriate level to help us to assess suitability.

The Foundation will regularly review our recruitment procedures in response to changes in legislation and systems external to our organisation (e.g. DBS and barring list checks).

The Foundation will renew DBS checks for staff and volunteers on a regular basis in line with guidance issued by the DBS, in consultation with the DSL.

Any positive DBS checks will be subject to a risk assessment made on a case by case basis.

Masonic Charitable Foundation employees and volunteers with relevant roles and responsibilities will receive training in safeguarding during their induction, and annually as mandatory training thereafter.

Communication

We will communicate this policy to all staff, volunteers, service users and their families/carers. For example, by publishing it on our website and referring to it in appropriate communications.

To encourage everyone involved in our organisation to understand that safeguarding is everybody's business and is our collective responsibility, we will provide training and opportunities for discussions about issues and concerns, review and continue to learn and improve our safeguarding responsibilities.

Confidentiality

The Foundation endorse the principle that the welfare of the individual overrides any obligations of confidentiality we may hold to others. If information is shared or discussed it will only be on a "need to know" basis.

All reports and logs will be kept securely and confidentially in accordance with data protection regulations. Our privacy policy sets out how we adhere to data protection regulations and can be read in full at <https://mcf.org.uk/privacy/>

DSL details and role

The Foundation's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is **Claire Smith**. The Foundation's Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO) are **Emma Rider and Steve Warren**

Telephone: 0800 035 60 90

Email: safeguarding@mcf.org.uk

(Office hours only. If there is an emergency or an immediate risk of significant harm then contact the police immediately).

The role of the DSL is to oversee and ensure that the Foundation's Safeguarding Children and Young People policy is fully implemented. The DSO will be available to support or cover for the DSL. They will also handle any complaints or allegations against the DSL if appropriate.

This policy is reviewed by the Foundation's Board of Trustees on an annual basis.

Approved by Sir Paul Williams

Last reviewed / updated: November 2023

Next review / update due: November 2024

Appendix A: Relevant Policies and Procedures

- Appropriate allocation of visits
- Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Procedure
- DBS Policy
- Equity and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Photography and Filming Policies (Adults and Children)
- Privacy Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Visiting Volunteer Problem Solving Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Appendix B: Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Safeguarding

What to do if you have a concern about an MCF applicant, beneficiary, volunteer or staff member



Safeguarding Code of Conduct

At the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF), we believe that all staff and volunteers share responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults who are at risk. The code of conduct sets out essential information and reminds us all of our responsibilities. By following it, you will be able to check that you are doing the right thing and behaving in the right way:

Do remember that you are a representative of the MCF. Set a good example for others to follow.

Do respect your position of trust and maintain appropriate boundaries and relationships with at-risk children, young people and adults, as well as volunteers and staff.

Do treat everyone with dignity and respect in line with the MCF values.

Do be responsible and accountable in the way you perform your role.

Do encourage an open and transparent culture where people can challenge inappropriate attitudes or behaviours.

Do make sure you follow MCF policies and procedures and re-read them on a regular basis.

Do report all allegations, suspicions and concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Refer to the MCF's whistleblowing procedure if you feel an incident or concern cannot be reported to the DSL.

Do comply with all applicable UK laws and guidance.

Do not rely on your reputation or position to protect you.

Do not make assumptions, based on the reputation, position, or your own personal knowledge of someone that will delay or prevent you from sharing concerns.

Allegations, concerns and disclosures

If a person entrusts you with personal information or if you have a concern about a person's physical, sexual or emotional well-being it is YOUR responsibility to seek advice and support from the DSL.

Any safeguarding concerns or allegations about an MCF staff member, trustee or volunteer must be immediately referred to the DSL.

Important contact details

Claire Smith

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Telephone: 0800 035 60 90 option 1

Email: safeguarding@mcf.org.uk

Reporting a concern

Is there an emergency? Is there an immediate risk of significant harm?

↓ Yes

Inform the emergency services on 999

↓ No

Make a careful record of what you observe or are told

↓ Then

↓ Then

Contact the DSL
0800 035 60 90
safeguarding@mcf.org.uk

↓ Then

The DSL manages the information shared in accordance with the MCF Safeguarding Policy

Do's and Don'ts for handling a disclosure

Do

- Remain calm, approachable and receptive
- Listen carefully, without interrupting
- Acknowledge you understand how difficult this may be
- Make it clear that you are taking what is said seriously
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Let them know that you'll do everything you can to help them
- Make a written record of exactly what has been said
- Act immediately and share your concerns with the DSL
- Refer to the MCF policies for safeguarding, available on the website at www.mcf.org.uk

Do Not

- Promise confidentiality
- Delay in reporting the disclosure to the DSL
- Ask leading or probing questions
- Investigate
- Repeatedly question or ask the individual to repeat the disclosure
- Discuss the disclosure with people who do not need to know

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Appendix C: Key government initiatives and legislation

This list is not exhaustive.

You can find an overview of child safeguarding legislation on the NSPCC website at <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/>.

England and Wales

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Working together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups 2006
- Care Act 2014

Wales

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- The Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019
- Working together to safeguard people guidance

Appendix D: safeguarding reporting form



Ref: (Office use only)

Safeguarding Reporting Form

This form should be used to record safeguarding concerns relating to a child and/or vulnerable person. All information must be treated as confidential and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (safeguarding@mcf.org.uk or 0203 959 2817) within one working day or the next working day if it is a weekend.

In an emergency please do not delay in informing the police or social services.

The form should be completed at the time or immediately following a disclosure, but after all necessary emergency actions have been taken. Please complete the form as fully as possible.

Date of Disclosure:			Time of Disclosure:		
GAMES Reference (if available/known)					
1a	Person completing the form / reporting the concern				
Name:					
Role:					
Telephone:					
Email:					
Responding to my own concern:		Y/N	Responding to a 3rd party concern (details below):		Y/N
1b	Details of Third Party				
Name:					
Role:					
Telephone:					
Email:					
2	Who is the safeguarding concern regarding?				
Name:					
DOB:			Gender:		
Address:					

Telephone:					
Email:					
Mental capacity/Additional Needs/Disability:		Y/N	If yes, details:		
3	Is the person concerned aware of this referral being made to the DSL?	Y/N	If no, details:		
4a	Is anyone else aware of the concerns you have raised?	Y/N	If yes, details:		
		Role/Relationship		Name	Contact Details
4b	Is there anyone else in the household that could be at risk?	Y/N	If yes, details:		
		Role/Relationship		Name	Contact Details
5	Incident Date:			Incident Time:	
	Was this an emergency?	Y/N		If yes, details of actions taken and outcome:	

6	Please give full details of your account of the incident/ or account of the disclosure by a 3 rd party – in all cases, remain factual in your account and use the exact wording and/or terminology you were told.			
Please provide any witness account of the incident:				
Witness Name:				
Witness Role/ Relationship:				
Witness Telephone:				
Witness Email:				
Witness Account:				
7	Perpetrator Details / If known			
Is the alleged perpetrator an:		Individual/organisation		
Perpetrator Name:				
Role/Organisation:				
Telephone:				
Email:				

Any other info:			
8	Concern - Please mark all that apply		
A	Physical Abuse	J	Organisational
B	Emotional Abuse	K	Institutional
C	Neglect	L	FGM
D	Sexual Abuse	M	Prevent Duty (Channel referral)
E	Child Sexual/Criminal Exploitation (CSE/CCE)	N	Modern Slavery
F	Domestic Abuse	O	Trafficking
G	Psychological Abuse / Coercion/ Control (including "Cuckooing" and "mate crime")	P	Non-recent Abuse
H	Financial Abuse	Q	Mental Health Crisis
I	Modern Slavery	R	Other (please state):
9.	If a potential crime has been committed, have the police been informed/involved?		Y/N
	If yes, details:		
10a	Please list all agencies who are known to be involved with the client ie social worker/ support worker		
Agency/Role		Name	Contact details
10b	If Social services are supporting a family with children, what category level is the support at?		
Child Protection		Yes/No/Not known	Details:
Child In Need		Yes/No/Not known	Details:
Early Help		Yes/No/Not known	Details:
11	Chronology of actions/responses by Designated Safeguard Team:		
DS name:	Date/Time	Action/Response/Outcomes etc:	

Date of review:	
Reviewing team members:	
Outcomes/Learning:	
Actions:	

Appendix E: Useful external contacts

ChildLine Childline is the free helpline for children and young people in the UK. Children and young people can call 0800 1111 to talk about any problem.

Child Sexual Exploitation A definition and guidance on what to do if you suspect CSE <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

Female Genital Mutilation a definition and guidance on what to do if you suspect FGM <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

Forced Marriage Advice on what to do if you suspect a forced marriage is likely to occur or has occurred www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage

Local Safeguarding Children's Boards You can find your local board via your council

NSPCC The NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) is the UK's leading charity specialising in child protection and the prevention of cruelty to children. They run a helpline for professionals, parents and families www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/our-services/nspcc-helpline

PREVENT Prevent is short for 'Preventing Violent Extremism'. The overall aim of Prevent is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism by raising awareness of the issues and supporting people who may be vulnerable. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>