



# Museum of Music History

## MOMH-POL004 Safeguarding Policy

### **Introduction**

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established as outlined in the following:

- The Children Act 1989 (as amended 2004)
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

MOMh recognises that effective child protection work requires sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and a workforce that is competent and confident in responding to child protection situations.

This procedures document provides the basis for good practice within MOMH for Child Protection work. It should be read in conjunction with other Local Safeguarding Board Child Protection Policies and Procedures. These are in keeping with relevant national procedures and reflect what the Board considers to be safe and professional practice in this context. Child Protection has to be considered within professionals' wider "safeguarding" responsibilities that include a duty to cooperate under the Children Act 2004."

These procedures aim to provide a framework which ensures that all practice in the area of child protection is consistent with stated values and procedures that underpin all work with children and young people.

This document also seeks to make the professional responsibilities clear to all staff to ensure that statutory and other duties are met in accordance with Safeguarding Child Protection requirements and procedures.

### **Policy objectives**

The MOMH is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of all the children it works with and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The MOMH also recognises that good child protection policies and procedures are of benefit to everyone involved with the organisation's work, especially staff, as they can help protect them from erroneous or malicious allegations.

This policy applies to all applicants for volunteering and employment, all new starters and all existing staff and volunteers who have unsupervised access to, or contact with, children are required to:

- develop and maintain an awareness of the issues which can cause children harm
- report concerns following the procedures described in this policy document
- hold a current enhanced level Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and wherever possible be signed up to the DBS update service so regular checks can take place

The MOMH will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- adopting Child Protection Procedures and a Code of Practice which all who work on behalf of the organisation will be required to follow
- keeping parents/carers informed of any child protection or other concerns as appropriate
- reporting any concerns to the authorities as appropriate (e.g. NSPCC, police, social/welfare agencies)
- carefully following Safer Recruitment procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- providing effective management for all staff and volunteers through support and training.

MOMH is also committed to reviewing its Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Code of Practice annually.

### **Policy Statement**

It is MOMH's policy to:

- foster a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the planning and provision of services
- ensure that staff and volunteers are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where they feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role
- remind staff that they should never put themselves at risk and should avoid interaction with a child in any circumstances which might be misinterpreted

The MOMH undertakes that:

- All staff and volunteers working on behalf of the MOMH accept responsibility for the welfare and safety of children in their care, for reporting any concerns, and for adhering to the Code of Practice
- Two Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSLs), are appointed for each workshop, course or event where we are working with children
- The DSLs will be informed how to make appropriate referrals to child protection agencies and/or Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs) as and when appropriate and required
- Information relating to any allegation or disclosure will be clearly recorded and passed on to the relevant persons as soon as possible.

- All staff and volunteers working on behalf of the MOMH will be reminded that any disclosure from a child to an adult must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and it is for the DSO to determine the action to be taken.
- Particular care must be taken with confidentiality. The principle is that confidentiality should be maintained where possible, remembering that where an allegation has been made and is being investigated information must of necessity be shared with others (such as social services or the police). In these circumstances however, information will be shared on a need to know basis. The MOMH is aware that a vulnerable child must clearly understand the circumstances where information might be shared in order to establish that child's confidence and ensure that any further information is forthcoming.
- A culture of mutual respect between children and those who represent the MOMH in all its activities will be encouraged, with adults modelling good practice in this context
- All staff and volunteers with unsupervised access to children will have current enhanced

#### **DBS checks**

- Anybody who encounters child protection concerns in the context of their work on behalf of the MOMH will be supported when they report their concerns in good faith
- The MOMH's policy will be made available to staff and volunteers and actively promoted within the organisation

## **Establishing a Safer Environment**

The MOMH will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the MOMH whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities for children to develop the skills they need to recognise risks and stay safe from abuse.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) knows the name of the Designated Safeguarding Officer responsible for child protection and their role in helping staff to safeguard young people.
- Ensure all players and parent/carers know the name of the Designated Safeguarding Officer responsible for child protection and their role in helping staff to safeguard young people.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer responsible for child protection.
- Work with parents and carers to ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the MOMH and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations on the website. This

means that this may occasionally require cases to be referred to other investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure.

- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences and core groups.
- Keep written records of concerns about children to enable appropriate support to be targeted effectively.
- Ensure all records are kept securely.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer by contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer for allegations
- Ensure that all staff are fully DBS checked.

The MOMH will endeavour to support young people through:

- The MOMH ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives young people a sense of being valued.
- Notifying any concerns about a child who has a Child Protection Plan or is known to have an allocated social worker, to the child's social worker or, in his/her absence the manager or duty officer in the team.
- Ensuring it discusses with Central Advice and Duty Team (CADT) any significant concerns about a child which may indicate physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board child protection procedures.
- Require each member of staff to sign a specific register to indicate that they have read the policy in its entirety and they accept the dates to:
  - a) be familiar with this policy
  - b) implement the policy and cooperate with management in promoting Child Protection
- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding Officer and other nominated persons, in addition to annual review and ratification undertaken by the MOMH Trustees Board.

## **Good Practice Guidelines**

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards young people we need to agree standards of good practice.

Good practice includes:

- treating all young people with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving young people in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive and safe behaviour among young people
- being a good listener

- being alert to changes in young people’s “behaviour”
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the child protection policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact and information-sharing
- asking the young person’s permission before doing anything for them of a physical nature, such as administering first aid
- maintain appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between young people and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some young people lead to an increased risk of abuse
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour or language used by others both students and adults.

### **Abuse of Trust**

All staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards young people is unacceptable and that their conduct towards young people must be beyond reproach. In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of staff and a young person under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that young person is over the age of consent.

### **Children Who May Be Particularly Vulnerable**

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

To ensure that all young people working with us receive equal protection, we will be particularly aware of children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- Disability and sensory loss i.e. hearing loss/visual impairment
- living in a domestic abuse situation
- affected by parental substance misuse
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking

- do not have English as a first language

### **Support for Those Involved in a Child Protection Issue**

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support young people and their families and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact.
- Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a young person, independent link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from young people or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies

### **Complaints Procedure**

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a young person or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a young person that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Complaints are managed by the Chair, and nominated Trustees.

### **If you have Concerns about a Colleague**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a young person are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The whistleblowing policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead. Complaints about the Designated Safeguarding Officer should be reported to the Chair.

### **Staff who are the Subject of an Allegation**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make entirely false or malicious allegations, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to young people and we must act on every allegation. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

## **Photography and Images**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect young people we will:

- seek their written consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications).
- seek parental consent.
- ensure young people are appropriately dressed.
- encourage young people to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

## **Personal Contact and Social Media Code of Conduct**

Staff and volunteers are asked not to accept Facebook friend requests from children attending MOMH workshops or events, and not to give out or accept personal contact information. This is in place to protect staff from conduct that may be deemed inappropriate from any side.

## **Sexual violence and harassment**

The MOMH take a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that is never acceptable and will never be tolerated. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys”. To ignore this can lead to a culture that normalises abuse. All reports of sexual violence or harassment should be reported immediately.

## **Impact of abuse**

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationship and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

## **Procedures**

Key points for taking action are:

- Any member of staff who has concerns about a child relating to Child Protection (it should be made clear to students that CONFIDENTIALITY CANNOT BE guaranteed in respect of CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES) must report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- In accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures, the agreement of the family for a referral to Children’s Services Emergency Duty Team should be sought where possible. However, if it is felt that any such agreement seeking would increase the level of significant risk to the child, the matter should be discussed with the Central Advice and Duty Team and their advice sought. All referrals need to be confirmed in writing within 48 hours.

- All staff must protect themselves against allegations especially when meeting on a 1 to 1 basis with students.
- If the suspicions in any way involve another member of staff the matter needs to be brought to the attention of the Safeguarding Lead who will act in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example call 999 or 101
- Do not start your own investigation.
- Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family.
- Complete a record of concern.
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If you suspect a young person is at risk of harm

There will be occasions when you suspect that a young person may be at risk, but you have no “real” evidence. Use the Child Protection Incident form (see Appendix 1) to record these early concerns. If the young person does begin to reveal that they are being harmed you should follow the advice in the section “if a young person discloses to you”. If, following your conversation, you remain concerned, you should discuss your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If a young person discloses to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a young person talks to you about risks to their safety or wellbeing you will need to let them know that you must pass the information on – you are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which you do this is a matter for professional judgment. If you jump in immediately the young person may think that you do not want to listen, if you leave it till the very end of the conversation, the young person may feel that you have misled them into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During your conversation with the young person:

- Allow them to speak freely
- Remain calm and do not overreact – the young person may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you. Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – “I’m sorry this has happened”, “I want to help”, “This isn’t your fault”, “You are doing the right thing in talking to me.”
- Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the young person.
- Under no circumstances ask investigative or leading questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the young person’s mother think about all this.
- At an appropriate time tell the young person that in order to help them you must pass the information on.



- Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may not be comforting to a child who has been abused.
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying “I do wish you had told me about this when it started” or “I can’t believe what I’m hearing” may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- Tell the young person what will happen next. The young person may agree to go with you to see the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form, sign and date, and hand it to the designated person.
- Try to write the exact language the young person has used where possible.
- Seek support if you feel distressed.
- Report the disclosure as a priority.

### **Notifying parents/carers**

The MOMH will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a young person with their parents.

However, if the MOMH believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from children’s social care.

### **Monitoring and Record Keeping**

It is essential that accurate records be kept where there are concerns about the welfare of a child even where there is no need to refer to the matter immediately. These records will be kept in secure confidential files, which are separate from the child’s other records.

Staff should keep the Designated Safeguarding Officer informed of:-

- Concerns about appearance and dress
- Changed or unusual behaviour
- Concerns about health and emotional wellbeing
- Deterioration in educational progress
- Discussion with parents about concerns relating to the child
- Concerns about home condition or situations
- Concerns about young person on young person abuse

Reports may be needed for Child Protection Case conferences or the criminal/civil courts.

Consequently records and reports should be:

- Factual (no opinions)
- Non-judgemental (no assumptions)
- Clear

- Accurate
- Relevant

#### **Reporting directly to child protection agencies**

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police and the NSPCC if:

- The situation is an emergency and the Designated Safeguarding Officer or designated Trustees are all unavailable
- They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the young persons' safety.
- This information will be shared with the Local Authorities of the course venue and the home of the child(ren) concerned.

For review by the Trustees of MOMH by 31/01/2026