

Measham and District Youth Club

Safeguarding Policy

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Measham and District Youth Club (MYC) recognises that every child has a right to protection from any kind of abuse be it physical, emotional or sexual. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers working in this club/group to be aware of the correct procedures for dealing with any suggested incidences of abuse. Child Protection is not an isolated issue and we will work in partnership with other organisations to update procedures and adopt current legislation.

All staff and volunteers of MYC are aware that it is not their responsibility to investigate matters of abuse but to REFER suspicions or allegations of abuse to the **designated person** (see at bottom of policy for contact details) whose responsibility it is then to refer on to the County Council worker with responsibility for protecting young people, or to the Police.

1. The formal definition of child abuse is

‘Children may be in need of protection where their basic needs are not being met, in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development, and they will be at risk through avoidable acts of commission or omission on the part of their parent(s), sibling(s) or other relative(s), or carer(s)’. The categories commonly used to describe the areas of abuse are:

Physical Injury
Sexual Abuse
Non-organic failure to thrive
Emotional Abuse
Physical Neglect

2. Dealing with an incident

Upon receipt of any information from a child or suspicions, it is necessary to:

- listen to the child and take what they are saying seriously
- inform them that there are some things that are so serious that you are not allowed to keep it secret and if they continue to tell you about such things, you will have to pass this information on to others who can help.
- reassure them that they are doing the right thing by telling you
- remain calm and neutral, no matter what they are telling you
- clarify anything you are unsure of but do not interrogate
- allow them the time they need to speak - it may be very difficult for them to tell you some things and you must let them say it in their own words - remember, they must trust you very much at this moment
- write down accurately everything that was said or seen and what action you took
- treat everything said as confidential between you, the child and the designated person and tell the child this

- pass on all information to the designated person and allow them to deal with it

3. Dealing with urgent cases

If the situation is clearly an urgent case, the child is too frightened to go home or you have serious doubts about the child's safety, contact the duty Social Worker (see bottom of policy for number) or the Police immediately.

4. Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers

Those who subject children to abuse look just like any other adult and may seek employment in either paid or unpaid in roles which bring them into contact with young people. It is the responsibility of the nominated person of the group to ensure that all possible steps are taken to check the suitability of those they employ. This will be done in the following way:

- All staff and volunteers with regular access to children have completed the vetting and barring application process and this has been seen and approved by their the designated person.
- The names of two referees will be requested. We may also speak to the referees personally
- All prospective volunteers and staff will be interviewed
- All people interviewed will be required to provide 2 forms of identification at interview
- All relevant previous experience of staff and volunteers will be noted
- All staff and volunteers will undergo a 3-month probationary period

5. Training of staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers will be aware of the contents of this policy and guidance and will attend appropriate Safeguarding training every two years. They will be made familiar with reporting procedures and the identity of the designated person. All staff and volunteers will be consulted on the appropriateness of this document and stated procedures on an annual basis.

6. The role of the designated person

The designated person is responsible for ensuring that this policy is up to date, that it is clearly displayed (if possible) and that volunteers and staff are aware of its content, have read and understood it. You will keep up to date with current guidelines and be aware of who the designated social work team is for your area. Have to hand at all times the telephone numbers of your social work team and the police. Always contact them for advice and guidance and

remember that all referrals are discussed thoroughly by the statutory agencies prior to any action being taken. You should:

- Ensure that the Leaders hold a register of every child involved with the club and have a contact name close to hand in case of emergencies
- Remember that some issues are confidential
- Where possible consider activities which involve more than one adult being present or at least within sight and hearing of others
- Remember, someone might misinterpret your actions even if they are well-intentioned
- Respect a child's right to personal privacy
- Provide time for children to talk to you
- Encourage children to respect and care for others
- Take action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour
- Remember to **REFER not INVESTIGATE** any suspicions or allegations of abuse
- Only discuss these concerns with the necessary and appropriate staff or volunteers
- If possible, designate a male and female adult who will be responsible for dealing with concerns around Safeguarding and ensure that they are known to those using the group and to parents or carers

The designated person may consider that complaints of a lesser nature (although still serious) such as bullying, cheating etc. may be handled internally without outside involvement. It must be emphasized however, that each case will be thoroughly investigated and remedied to the satisfaction of the young person/reporting person concerned.

7. Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing occurs when a worker or volunteer raises a concern about potential danger or illegality that they have witnessed through work.

Staff and volunteers are able to by-pass direct management lines if that is where their concerns arise and any malpractice will be taken seriously by the group. This includes senior management staff. Concerns may include:

- Unlawful conduct e.g. assaulting a young person
- Dangers to the public
- Safety of young people

MYC will not tolerate the victimisation or harassment from others and will ensure that staff and volunteers who report concerns will be treated seriously and be supported throughout the investigation, even if their concerns prove to be unfounded at a later date.

In the first instance concerns can be made to the nominated group member (*see below*) or should the concern be regarding this member, the management committee at MYC. This should be in writing to the nominated person or if this is not appropriate by email.

At this point the contacted person will acknowledge the receipt of the concern within 2 working days (provided they are not away) and an investigation carried out within two weeks.

Initially, the organisation will conduct an internal investigation to establish if the report is unfounded or not and take appropriate action, e.g. report to the police or social care and health. Confidentiality of the complainant and any other person involved in the allegation and resulting investigation will remain paramount by all concerned.

If at any point the whistleblowers identity must be made public the organisation will provide additional support either internally or if preferred by an external agency.

Should an allegation be made anonymously the process of investigation will remain the same and the results kept in a confidential file.

The whistleblower will be informed of any outcome or action which has or will take place through supportive supervision. At all times all individuals involved in the process will be treated with respect.

False or malicious complaints will be treated very seriously and disciplinary procedures will be pursued.

Nominated Group Member is -:

Dr Martin Vaughan, 39, Burton Road, Ashby de la Zouch, Leics. LE65 2LF
mvaughan9@gmail.com

8. Complaint of abuse against a member of staff

Should this type of complaint be made, there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation
- A safeguarding investigation
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation

Issues of misconduct will be dealt with by a committee of the designated Safeguarding Officer and other Trustees. The group will ensure appropriate

action is taken and that at all times, we recognise the importance of maintaining confidentiality where this is required in a legal context.

SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

GUIDE TO PROTECTING STAFF

This guide is intended to reduce the situations for the abuse of young people and help protect staff and volunteers by promoting good practice.

- Adult volunteer and staff are advised not to spend excessive time alone with young people. All adults should always be publicly open when working with young people. Adults should avoid situations where they are completely unobserved. Do not go into the toilet alone with young people.
- Individual meetings with young people should take place as openly as possible. Avoid making arrangements to meet a young person alone in your home outside organised activities; unless it is with the full knowledge and consent of the parents and that the group management are aware of the meeting.
- In an occasion, privacy is required, one of the group designated persons should be informed and at least one should be within earshot of the conversation. The door should be left open.
- When working with mixed groups in an outdoor environment with young people, there should be a male and female adult present. If this is not possible, parents should be requested to stay to help supervise.
- Adults should avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. On occasion, when an injury occurs or a young person is distressed, the involved adult should explain to the young person what he or she is doing but only with the consent of the injured party and in full view of as many persons as possible. Some parents/guardians are sensitive about physical contact (manual support) and their views should always be carefully considered.
- All adults should be careful of extending hugs and be in situations where bodily contact is involved. This is important not only for adult protection but for the protection of the young person also.
- If a young person touches an adult in an inappropriate place record the incident and report it to the designated person (see below). While an incident could be purely innocent, efforts should be made to inform the young person concerned that this behaviour is not acceptable, in a manner that does not intimidate the young person involved.
- Car journeys, however short, should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parent/guardian of young person and should always be

undertaken by an adult volunteer who is a member of staff or a volunteer or a Trustee. It is not good practice to be alone with a young person in the car and if possible make your pickup point or drop-off point with at least two young people present. Anyone transporting young people must have the appropriate insurance in place.

- Never engage with any young person in the group in a sexually provocative manner or indulge in horseplay, which may be construed in the wrong manner.
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a young person, even in fun.
- Never let any allegations made by a young person go without being addressed and recorded.
- Never let the use of foul language go unchallenged.

If a complaint is made, the safeguarding designated person or in his absence one of the other trustees should be informed and a record of that meeting logged.

Never keep suspicions of abuse by a colleague to yourself. If there is an attempt to cover up you could be implicated by your silence. Inform the appropriate person at the club of your suspicions.

The above rules are designed to be observed for general day-to-day routine and normal group activities that take place as part of the group's normal activities. In addition to the above procedures, there may be additional rules apply to different settings.

**The Designated Person is currently :- Dr Martin Vaughan.
01530 412220
07970 060 987
mvaughan9@gmail.com**

**The telephone number for First Response Children's Duty team
(urgent referrals only) :- 0116 305 0005**

**The telephone number for the duty Social Worker :- Emergency Duty Team
Telephone: 0116 255 1606**

Revised November 2017