

This safeguarding policy is a statement that makes it clear to all staff and volunteers within our organisation and the children, young people and families that use our services, our commitment to safeguarding children

1. INTRODUCTION

Mini Mermaid Running Club UK (MMRC UK) is an organisation that provides after school and community activities for children between the ages of 7 – 14. We deliver programmes that enhance children's connection with movement and activity whilst developing their self-confidence and empowering them to make positive choices for their future.

MMRC UK believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and fully recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment of practice that protects them. We are committed to the welfare and safeguarding of children and young people within all activities that the organisation undertakes.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989;
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of their level of dependency or their communication needs; and
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and their agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The purpose of our policy:

- to provide protection for the children and young people who receive MMRC UK's services, including the children of adult members or users; and
- to provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of directors, paid staff, volunteers and occasional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of MMRC UK.

The ways in which we will seek to safeguard children and young people are as follows.

- By valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- By adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- By recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- By sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
- By sharing information about concerns with agencies that need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
- By providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children.

2. A NAMED PERSON(S) FOR SAFEGUARDING

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Hannah Corne

Designated Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Nicola Eccles

Mobile Numbers: 07815 155530/07973 873504

Emergency Contact No: 07920 013364

Telephone number of Leeds City Council Children's Social Work Service:

0113 222 4403 (**during office hours**)

Leeds City Council Social Care - Emergency Duty Team - 0113 240 9536 (**out of hours**)

NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline - 0800 028 0285

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Officer:

- MMRC UK has appointed a Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL), and a deputy DSL to contact in her absence.
- Our named DSL with lead responsibility and management oversight/accountability for safeguarding and child protection matters is Hannah Corne. This responsibility cannot be delegated.
- The DSL is supported by Nicola Eccles. Together they are responsible for coordinating all child protection activity.
- The DSL must ensure that all staff involved in direct casework of vulnerable children, where there are child protection concerns/issues, have access to regular safeguarding supervision. (Leeds City Council Safeguarding Supervision: Policy and Guidance - Revised 2013). If there is a risk of immediate harm, a referral should be made immediately.

3. RECOGNISING THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

The descriptions below are taken from the Department for Education guidance 'Keeping children safe in education'. Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

ABUSE: Abuse is 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: 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/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child. Signs may include:

- Unexplained injuries or burns
- Untreated injuries
- Bruises/abrasion around the face
- Bi-lateral injuries e.g. two bruised eyes
- Bite marks
- Bruising abrasions to lips, cheeks, outer ear

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: Is 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 children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far 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 the 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. Indicators include:

- Excessive overreaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation
- Excessive rocking, thumb sucking, hair twisting
- Extreme compliance/aggression
- Significant peer relationship difficulties

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 include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or 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. Indicators include:

- Sexual awareness inappropriate to child's age, including provocative sexual behaviour
- Self-harm
- Sudden changes in behaviour or school performance
- Fear of undressing for gym
- Depression/withdrawal

NEGLECT: Is 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. Indicators include:

- Constant hunger, tiredness, and/or poor personal hygiene
- Untreated medical problems
- Destructive tendencies
- Social isolation
- Poor self-esteem and/or relationship with peers
- Excessive rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking

BULLYING: While bullying between children is not a discrete category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying should be reported.

4. BECOMING AWARE OF A SAFEGUARDING ISSUE

It is important to always be aware of the signs of safeguarding. Below are some ways that safeguarding may be brought to your attention.

- A third party or anonymous allegation is received.
- A child or young person's appearance, behaviour, play, drawing or statements cause suspicion of abuse and/or neglect.
- A child or young person reports an incident or incidents of alleged abuse which occurred some time ago.
- A written report is made regarding the serious misconduct of a worker towards a child or young person.

5. WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A CHILD

It is important that you treat any allegations extremely seriously. Never think that someone else may be dealing with it. If you receive information that a child may be at risk of, or experiencing harm make sure you know how to respond appropriately.

Stage 1

- Initially talk to a child/young person about what you are observing. It is okay to ask questions, *for example: "I've noticed that you don't appear yourself today, is everything okay?"* But never use leading questions.
- Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously. Act at all times towards the child as if you believe what they are saying.
- It is not the responsibility of groups to investigate incidences of suspected child abuse but to gather information and refer only.
- Always explain to children and young people that any information they have given will have to be shared with others, if this indicates they and or other children are at risk of harm.
- Notify the DSL (above).
- Record what was said as soon as possible after any disclosure. The person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete a pro-forma and ensure it is signed and dated.
- Respect confidentiality and file documents securely.

Stage 2

- The DSL should take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the DSL should contact the police and/or the Duty and Advice Team. If a referral is made direct to the Duty and Advice team this should be followed up in writing within 24 hrs.

N.B. Parents/carers will need to be informed about any referral to Children & Young people's Social Care unless to do so would place the child at an increased risk of harm.

6. SAFE RECRUITMENT

For safe recruitment practice, MMRC UK will complete the following process for each volunteer and member of staff.

- All staff members should be aware of systems within MMRC UK which support safeguarding and these will be explained as part of the induction. This includes the child protection policy and the safer working practice document.
- MMRC UK will ensure that all staff, including temporary and volunteers, receive induction appropriate to their roles and responsibilities.
- Training completed will be recorded by MMRC UK; a print out of our training history can be obtained from the Safeguarding team.
- All staff (voluntary or employed) will be subject to the following procedures:
 - Application form and data collection
 - Enhanced DBS check
 - Reference check – two referees (anyone who has applied for a position from abroad will undergo further reference checks and a 'fit person' check)
 - Request to provide the relevant documents to confirm identity
 - Request to provide proof of any qualifications that they have in relevance to the position they are applying for
 - Face-to-face interview (where possible, or an online Skype interview)
 - Provided with safeguarding policies and procedures which they are expected to sign once read and understood. They then will be provided with safeguarding training via the safeguarding trainer.
 - All members of staff should be aware of systems within MMRC UK which support safeguarding and these will be explained as part of our staff induction. This includes: our child protection policy; the safer working practice document and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their cover or nominated deputy.
- MMRC UK pays full regard and commitment to following the safer recruitment, selection and pre-employment vetting procedures as outlined part three of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015).
- MMRC UK will maintain a single central record which demonstrates the relevant vetting checks required including: a barred list check; DBS check at the correct level; and an identity and qualifications check (if necessary).
- All recruitment materials will include reference to MMRC UK's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of participants in the programme.
- MMRC UK will ensure that where relevant, individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009.

7. MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION OF STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

All staff and volunteers are welcomed and encouraged to contact their line manager with regard to any safeguarding concerns.

Once the induction and training is complete and staff and volunteers are running a programme, their line manager will be in touch regularly to discuss any concerns. They also have the opportunity to debrief after the programme has finished.

8. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

Mini Mermaid Running Clubs' Whistle Blowing/Confidential reporting Policies provide guidance to staff and volunteers on how they can raise concerns and receive appropriate feedback on action taken, when staff have concerns about any adult's behaviour.

These procedures must be followed in any case in which it is alleged that a member of staff, or volunteer 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; and/or
- behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Inappropriate behaviour by staff/volunteers could take the following forms.

- Physical. For example: intentional use of force as a punishment; slapping; use of objects to hit with; throwing objects; or rough physical handling.
- Emotional. For example: intimidation; belittling; scapegoat; sarcasm; lack of respect for children's rights; and attitudes which discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality.
- Sexual. For example: sexualised behaviour towards pupils (inappropriate touching, sexual language or sexually explicit innuendo); sexual harassment; sexual assault; and rape.
- Neglect. May include failing to act to protect a child or children, failing to seek medical attention or failure to carry out appropriate/proper risk assessment, etc.

A safeguarding complaint that meets the above criteria must be reported to Hannah Corne immediately.

- Hannah Corne should carry out an urgent initial consideration in order to establish whether there is substance to the allegation.

- She should not carry out the investigation itself or interview pupils.
- As part of this initial consideration, Hannah Corne should consult with the schools/community center's HR Advisor/provider/contact who will then contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), within one working day.
- A multi-agency strategy meeting may be arranged to look at the complaint in its widest context, Hannah Corne /and a senior member of school staff / Community centre must attend this meeting, which will be arranged by the LADO. All issues must be recorded and the outcome reached must be noted to ensure closure.

LADO Contacts: Ted O'Sullivan or Carolyn Hargreaves Tel: 0113 2478457.

Advice can also be sought from either of the two named senior allegations managers for education – Raminder Aujla – Team Manager Education and Year Early Years Safeguarding Team 0113 3951211, or Sophie Thompson Team Manager HR Schools Team – 0113 2474155.

9. RECORDING AND MANAGING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

- The legal principle that the “welfare of the child is paramount” needs to be dealt with in context.
- Privacy and confidentiality should be respected where possible but if doing this leaves a child at risk of harm then the child’s safety has to come first.
- Legally, it is fine to share information if someone is worried about the safety of a child.
- Not everyone needs to know when a concern or worry is raised. This respects the child’s, family’s and/or staff’s rights to privacy. So only people who need to know should be told about it. Otherwise there might be gossip and rumours or other people may be genuinely concerned.
- It is fine to say that a concern has been raised and it is being dealt with following the group’s procedures.
- At the back of these guidelines there is a report form, which should be filled in for recording and concerns/ allegations/ abuse or harm. It should be filled in and signed by the person who is completing the form.
- MMRC UK takes confidentiality very seriously. All personal data is stored in a confidential locked file online and in secure premises.
- Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of Safeguarding. Mini Mermaid Running Club UK recognises that the only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child.
- In line with Education Leeds E-safety guidance (2009) staff/ volunteers are not permitted to use personal equipment capable of recording images, moving images or sounds and those used for accessing the internet such as mobile phones, cameras, video cameras and laptops in work time without the prior permission of senior management.

10. DISTRIBUTING/ REVIEWING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This document will be reviewed annually. A copy of this document can be found on our website www.minimermaiduk.com and a printed copy can be obtained from our head office at:

271 Lidgett

Lane Leeds

LS17 6PD

11. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

These policies are approved by the Board of Directors of MMRC UK who are:

Hannah Corne

Nicola Eccles

Louise Cazan

As a Board, we have provided in this document:

- a clear framework for behaviour management towards any children or young people;
- information about procedures to follow if an allegation is made;
- that all workers have training to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse;
- that that all staff have enhanced DBS checks;
- that we correct policies in place covering staff activities e.g.: health and safety, lone working, etc;
- that we understand what is good safeguarding practice and take responsibility for ensuring this is undertaken by all staff within our organization;
- that all workers understand that physical punishment or threat of physical punishment must never be used; and
- that workers understand that verbal humiliation of children is unacceptable.

Strictly Confidential

Cause for Concern Form

Note: Please do not interpret what is seen or heard; simply record the facts. After completing the form, pass it immediately to the Designated Safe Guarding Lead.

Name of child..... Class / Tutor group.....

Name of staff member completing form.....

Day..... Date..... Time..... Place..... ..

(of observed behaviour / discussion / disclosure)

Signed: _____

Action/passed to _____

For: Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer Use

Name: _____ Date: _____ Time _____

Action Taken By whom Outcome

Discuss with child

Ensure the child's wishes and feelings are ascertained where appropriate and fully recorded.

Monitoring sheet

Check behaviour database

Contact parents

Please tick

Telephone Call _____

Meeting: _____

Check SEN Register

Refer to Social Care

Other (Please specify)

This Document will be reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding officer for Mini Mermaid Running Club. Changes will be made where necessary and implementation and training will be given where needed.

Date: 22/1/2016

Date of Review: December 2016

I have read and understood MMRC UK's child safeguarding procedures and agree to follow them throughout my time here:

Name:

Position:

Signed _____

Dated _____