



Mid Sussex Food Partnership - Policies and Procedures: vs 1.0

1 Purpose and aims

1.1 This document applies to all staff, directors and volunteers working on behalf of MSFP and relates to children and young people up to the age of 18.

1.2 It is MSFP's policy that all staff and volunteers including Directors working for MSFP is committed to creating an environment where children and young people are protected from all forms of abuse. It is every individual's responsibility to ensure that all children and young people who receive MSFP's services are safe from harm.

1.3 We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child 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 a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

1.4 We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

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



2 Legal framework

2.1 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

3 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

3.1 Patrick Mayhew, MSFP Chair is the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and must be contacted at patrick_mayhew@hotmail.com on 07485 565750 if ever a concern should arise regarding child safeguarding issues.

3.2 The role of the DSL is to:

- Keep up to date on national and local changes in policy and procedure in relation to child protection.
- Know which child protection agency to report to, should a concern arise, and who to speak to.
- Support staff members with any child protection issues that arise in their work.
- Make sure that appropriate information is available at the time of a referral and the referral is confirmed in writing.
- Keep in contact with social services, NSPCC and other agencies. Ensure people who need to know are aware of any action taken and any further action to be taken e.g. disciplinary.
- Ensure that all child protection records are stored properly and confidentially in a secure, locked drawer or cabinet.
- Keep up to date with current legislation and guidance to ensure that MSFP's child protection policy and procedures are reviewed annually or following any changes in legislation, are up to date and comply with current good practice.

4 Staff Training

4.1 Further information on the types of child abuse is provided at Appendix 1 of this document. Training will be provided, as appropriate, to ensure that staff and volunteers are able to recognise signs of abuse and all staff, volunteers, and others deemed as needing to know, will be provided with copies of MSFP's



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Child Protection policy and procedures as part of their induction. Additional training may be required where appropriate. Specialist training will be provided for the DCP.

5 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

5.1 All staff and volunteers who come into contact with children and left with them unsupervised will require an enhanced (with barred list) Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. It is against the law for organisations to employ someone or allow them to volunteer for this kind of work if they know they are barred from working with children.

6 Procedure for reporting concerns

6.1 All staff members and volunteers shall report any concerns about a child or somebody else's behaviour using these procedures.

6.2 There are a number of ways in which suspicions or concerns are raised:

- A staff member or volunteer
- Child disclosing abuse
- Bruising or signs of physical hurt which may or may not be accompanied by unusual or inappropriate behavior.

6.3 MSFP accepts its responsibility of duty of care towards children and young people. Any person who may encounter any concerns whilst working at MSFP will be supported when they come forward with their concerns.

6.4 If an allegation is made or a staff member or volunteer has concerns they should report it to the DCP straight away by telephone or in person and complete an incident report form (provided at Appendix 2) for the DCP within 24 hours. It is of up-most importance that these procedures should be carried out as quickly as possible, so as not to threaten the welfare of the child. If the concerns are with regard to a member of staff the DCP should be contacted immediately in person or by telephone.

6.5 The DCP will consider all reports and will either report them straight to the authorities or, after seeking advice (from NSPCC or alike), decide not to refer concerns to the authorities but will keep a detailed record of the report.

7 Responding appropriately to a child making an allegation of abuse

- Stay calm.



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- Listen to what the child has to say.
- Allow the child to speak without interruption. Accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not make any promises to keep secrets, as you may have to take it to someone else. Child Protection will always have precedence over any other priorities.
- Reassure the child that only those that need know about it, will.
- Always let the child proceed at their own pace.
- Do not ask prompting or leading questions.
- Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing by telling.
- Tell them what the next step is and who will be told.
- Record what the child said as accurately as possible. Use the child's words or explanations and do not translate into your own words in case you misconstrue what the child was trying to say.
- Do not decide for yourself whether abuse has taken place - that is for the professional child protection agencies to decide.

8 Code of Practice

8.1 MSFP expects all staff and volunteers to be aware of this code of practice and adhere to it at all times.

- The investigation process with a child should be as open as possible and it is important that no more time should be spent alone with a child than is necessary.
- Respect the child's need for privacy, but ensure other staff are informed of the meeting and its whereabouts.
- It is not good practice to take a child alone in a car or on any journey. Never engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay.
- Never do things of a personal nature for a child or young person that they can do for themselves.
- Never allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind.
- Never make any suggestive or inappropriate remarks to a child, even to be said in jest could get taken the wrong way or offend.
- Never try and dissuade a child from making a disclosure of abuse.
- It is important for all staff members to be aware that child abusers come in all ages (even other children) they can be any gender, ethnic origin or class. It is also important not to favour people and have preconceptions; it could prevent the right action to be taken in a situation. Staff and volunteers at MSFP must always value children as individuals and treat them with respect



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and dignity and must not tolerate bullying, shouting, racism and sexism. Always use appropriate language with children and young people and challenge any inappropriate language used by a child or young person or an adult working with young people. Staff and volunteers need to recognise and understand the needs of children from minority ethnic groups, those with special needs and children with disabilities, together with the barriers they may face, especially around communication.

9 Confidentiality

9.1 The Children Act 1989 states that "the welfare of a child is paramount". This means that 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. Confidentiality must not be promised to a child in case a situation arises where information must be passed on for the safety of the child. However, MSFP will share information only with those who need to know in the interests of the child's welfare.

10 Approval and Adoption

10.1 It is suggested that this Policy and Procedure is reviewed every 2 years

10.2 Before the completion of future reviews, West Sussex Children's Services should be consulted and asked whether there have been any changes to their Safeguarding Children's Policy and Procedures, which should be reflected in our current review of the past two years.

Signature of Chair: Patrick Mayhew

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Appendix 1

What is child abuse?

The NSPCC are the leading national charity that fights to end child abuse in the UK. It defines child abuse as any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. Neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse.

An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event. And it can increasingly happen online.

Types of child abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, gripping, biting, cutting, bruising, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment or emotional neglect of a child. It's sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a child's emotional health and development. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare or humiliate a child or isolating or ignoring them.

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and is the most common form of child abuse. A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care. A child may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm. They may not get the love, care and attention they need from their parents. A child who's neglected will often suffer from other abuse as well. Neglect is dangerous and can cause serious, long-term damage - even death.

Sexual A child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This doesn't have to be physical contact and it can happen online. Sometimes the child won't understand that what's happening to them is abuse and they may not even understand that it is wrong. There are 2 different types of child sexual abuse. These are called contact abuse and non-contact abuse.

- Contact abuse involves touching activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a child, including penetration. It includes sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child's wearing clothes or not; rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus; forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity; making a child take their



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clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

- Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities, such as grooming, exploitation, persuading children to perform sexual acts over the internet and flashing. It includes encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts; not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others; meeting a child following sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them; online abuse including making, viewing or distributing child abuse images; allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images; showing pornography to a child; sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child exploitation).

Other Categories

- Bullying (including cyberbullying),
- witnessing domestic abuse,
- online abuse,
- female genital mutilation,
- hate crime,
- child sexual exploitation,
- trafficking,
- grooming,
- racism and other types of discrimination.

Like other kinds of abuse these can harm a child physically and emotionally. Further information on all types of child abuse can be found on the NSPCC website:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/>

Further resources and guidance:

- NSPCC: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/>
- Pan Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures: <http://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/>
- West Sussex Safeguarding Children Board: <http://www.westsussexscb.org.uk/professionals/>
- West Sussex County Council <https://www.westsussex.aov.uk/education-children-andfamilies/keeping-children-safe/raise-a-concern-about-a-child/#how-toreport>



Appendix 2

Incident Report Form

Initial cause for concern form which must be discussed with the DCPD within 24 hours.

Date

Time

Name of child/young person

Date of birth

Age

Home address

Name/address of parent/s or person/s with parental responsibility

Tel

Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else?

Describe the concern and action taken. (include date and time of any specific incident, and what has prompted the concern. Use the child's own words if he/she has been spoken to about the concern)

Observations to support cause for concern

Description and location of any visible marks, bruising etc



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Has this information been passed onto anyone else? Give details.

Names of any witnesses (where appropriate)

Name of alleged abuser, (if known)

ACTION TAKEN

Name of person completing form:

Signature:

Date:

Name of DCPD

Signature:

Date: