



Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures, March 2023 v2.1

History of development and review

| | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Policy [v1] developed by: | Abigail Fox-Jaeger, Treasurer | December 2022 |
| Policy [v1] approved at: | As agreed at AGM 29 March 2023 | March 2023 |
| Policy [v2.0] reviewed, updated and procedures added by: | Abigail Fox-Jaeger, Trustee | January 2025 |
| Policy [v2.1] approved by: | Committee/Trustees | February 2025 |
| | | |

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| 1.0 Policy Statement | 4 |
| 2.0 Scope | 4 |
| 3.0 Aims & Purpose..... | 5 |
| 4.0 Legislation | 5 |
| 5.0 Implementation..... | 5 |
| 6.0 Policy review | 6 |
| Our commitment to keeping adults at risk safe. | 7 |
| 1.0 Roles and responsibilities for working with other professionals and agencies to promote the wellbeing of adults at risk, and protect them from harm. | 7 |
| 2.0 Recruitment practices around safeguarding | 9 |
| 3.0 Procedures for responding to safeguarding concerns..... | 9 |
| 4.0 Procedures for dealing with concerns or incidents of abuse. | 9 |
| 5.0 Resolution and disciplinary action..... | 10 |

Introduction

Mind and Soul Community Choir (M&SCC) is based in Camberwell, on the border of Southwark and Lambeth boroughs in South London. It emerged from a project run by staff from South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust almost 20 years ago.

The core business of the choir is to provide a safe and secure environment for service users, carers, friends, family, people from the local community, and staff from NHS Trusts in the area, to sing together, guided by a professional musician/choir lead. There are opportunities for choir members to participate in public performances, often singing with other choirs.

Improving individuals' wellbeing and breaking down the barriers and stigma associated with mental health through the shared pleasure of singing continues to be at the heart of what we do. We promote physical, psychological, and environmental wellbeing through shared activity, enjoyment, and social inclusion. We offer educational, leisure and social activities for members, developing opportunities for friendship/companionship and mutual support to reduce social isolation.

Safeguarding duties for adults at risk apply to any charity like M&SCC, working with people aged 18 or over who:

- have care and/or support needs (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect and
- as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect

This document lays out the policy and procedures M&SCC has adopted to ensure it fulfils those duties.

Part One – Safeguarding Policy

1.0 Policy Statement

Mind and Soul Community Choir:

- believes everyone has the right to live free from abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status.
- is committed to the six principles of safeguarding adults which includes: empowerment, protection, prevention, proportionality, partnership and accountability.
- is committed to Safeguarding Adults in line with national legislation and relevant local guidelines by ensuring that our activities are delivered in a way which keeps all adults safe by creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution
- recognises that health, well-being, ability, disability and need for care and support can affect a person's resilience.
- recognises that some people experience barriers, for example, to communication in raising concerns or seeking help. accepts that we are required to fulfil our duty of care, which means that we must do everything that can be reasonably expected of us to help safeguard and protect people from harm, and to act when we suspect that someone is being harmed, or is at risk of harm.
- is committed to creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm to adults which necessitates: the recognition of adults who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk and being willing to report safeguarding concerns.

2.0 Scope

This policy and associated procedures apply to: all individuals involved in M&SCC including members (beneficiaries), staff (whether employed or freelance), volunteers (including trustees) and to all concerns about safety of adults at risk whilst taking part in our organisation and its activities.

Safeguarding adults at risk means protecting their right to live in safety and free from abuse and neglect. M&SCC may have trustees, staff, volunteers, beneficiaries or other connections who are classed as adults at risk.

The policy recognises the term *adult at risk* describes: a person, aged over 18, at risk as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. This might include adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including addiction, or reduced physical or mental capacity. Risk is determined by the activity an adult is taking part in and not solely on the personal characteristics or circumstances of the adult, as such any adult can be at risk, and the risk can be temporary.

3.0 Aims & Purpose

The aims of the policy are:

- To protect adults at risk who are beneficiaries and receive services from or staff/volunteers working for M&SCC.
- To ensure that safeguarding of adults at risk is a primary consideration when M&SCC undertakes any activity, event or project.
- Ensure staff and volunteers working with adults at risk are carefully recruited and understand and accept responsibility for the safeguarding vulnerable individuals they interact with.

The purpose of the policy is to demonstrate M&SCC's commitment to safeguarding adults at risk and to ensure that everyone involved in the choir and its activities are aware of:

- Legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding adults.
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults.
- What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult within the organisation.

4.0 Legislation

In a wider context, adult safeguarding applies to everyone over the age of 18 and is about:

- protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse and neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

The practices and procedures described in this policy are based on the relevant legislation (England) and government guidance including:

The Care Act 2014
Mental Capacity Act 2005
Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
Sexual Offences Act 2003
Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
Modern Slavery Act 2015
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
Charity Commission safeguarding guidance 2018
Serious Crime Act 2015
Data Protection Act 2018 (inc GDPR)

5.0 Implementation

Details of how the plans to implement this policy are described in detail in the Procedures below and includes:

M&SCC committee and choir members identified and appointed a Named Safeguarding Officer (NSO) at the AGM in 2023. Members have been notified who this is and how to contact them. New members will be given this information in their 'Welcome Pack'. M&SCC follows safe recruitment procedures when employing staff and volunteers. This includes proof of DBS checks for the NSO and at least one Trustee.

All staff (meaning any employees, or independent contractors appointed and paid for by M&SCC, Trustees and committee members) have received safeguarding adults training.

All activities (such as performances) include an assessment of risks to safety of adults at risk from abuse and neglect. A safeguarding lead will be designated for each event.

All staff are aware of the of the safeguarding reporting procedures and the importance of confidentiality.

This policy is shared with staff, committee members, trustees, volunteers and beneficiaries. It is also publicly available on the choir's website.

6.0 Policy review

This policy will be reviewed and amended (if necessary) on an annual basis by the Trustees/committee. It will also be reviewed in response to changes in relevant legislation, good practice, where there has been a serious incident or in response to an identified failing in its effectiveness.

Part Two - Procedures

Our commitment to keeping adults at risk safe.

M&SCC is committed to safeguarding the well-being of the adults at risk we come in to contact with, and protecting them from harm by taking take effective action in a timely way, whenever harm is suspected or disclosed.

Membership of the choir is open to people over the age of 18. As the choir engages in community and in clinical settings, in participatory and performance conditions, we will act to safeguard adults at risk who may engage in that work.

Involvement with adults at risk might include, but is not limited to:

- People who attend workshops, rehearsals/performances and may include staff, volunteers, the committee or Trustees
- Relatives and friends who attend performances in a volunteering capacity
- Audience members at public performances

In broad terms we intend to meet this commitment by laying out clear roles, responsibilities and procedures that are inclusive and relevant to all those involved directly or indirectly in the choir.

The procedures are mandatory for all staff, trustees, volunteers (meaning any employees, or independent contractors appointed and paid for by M&SCC, Trustees and committee members) involved in M&SCC activities. Failure to comply with the procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal or exclusion from the organisation.

1.0 Roles & Responsibilities.

1.1 Roles

It is the role of all staff trustees, volunteers to know how to respond appropriately to a concern when it is raised by someone

Concern

A concern about the safety of an adult at risk may arise because:

- A person says that they are being abused or tells you about something that happened to them which you think would be harmful
- You see possible signs of abuse or neglect
- Somebody talks about another person being harmed or at risk of harm
- A person shares their experience of abuse in their past - this may be referred to as 'historical or non-recent abuse'

What to do

Staff trustees, volunteers should not investigate concerns themselves, as this is the role of the statutory agencies. However, if an adult talks to you, it is vital that you listen carefully:

Active Listening – do not interrogate the person or give opinions. Do not promise you will keep secrets but thank them for coming forward

Consent - to take action and to report the concern.

Remain calm –You may feel shocked, angry or upset by what you have been told, try to remain sensitive and sympathetic. Re-assure the individual that they have done nothing wrong.

Record - as soon as possible write down what you been told, but not during the disclosure. Ensure you record the facts as soon as possible – use the Safeguarding Concern Form if you can

Report to the NSO as soon as possible after the disclosure. But if there is an urgent and obvious threat to the health or life of a person, call the emergency services.

1.2 Responsibilities

While undergoing routine activities of the choir:

All, staff, Trustees and volunteers, have the responsibility to:

- be alert to the risks which abusers, or potential abusers, may pose
- be familiar with the Safeguarding policy and procedures
- recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect or other safeguarding concerns
- respond appropriately to a disclosure by an adult at risk abuse and notify the named safeguarding officer
- respond appropriately to allegations

Named Safeguarding Officer with the lead Trustee for Safeguarding have additional responsibilities:

- They have been trained in adult safeguarding.
- They will:
 - be first point of contact for any safeguarding issues and coordinate action accordingly
 - liaise with external agencies on individual cases of suspected or identified abuse
 - ensure all staff, trustees, volunteers are aware of the Safeguarding policy and procedures
 - ensure Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are completed as appropriate for new staff and kept up to date.
 - ensuring contractors/freelancers that may be working with adults at risk have current DBS certificates.
 - ensure safeguarding policies, practices are reviewed annually
 - gain feedback from members and staff that they know who to report to if they need help or have a concern
 - ensure members are aware of the policy and can access a copy as required
- Where M&SCC organises an activity or event they will be responsible for ensuring that:
 - planning is carried out in line with the Safeguarding policy.
 - an event is attended by an appropriate number of DBS checked adults (a minimum of one.)
 - there is a main contact for safeguarding on the day who has been DBS checked.
 - the main contact has access to emergency contact details and other relevant details (e.g. information about transport arrangements for adults at risk).
 - the gender of people at risk taking part in activities is reflected in the gender mix of those in attendance as well.
 - a person at risk should not be left alone with any adult, unless that adult is DBS checked and carrying out regulated activity.
 - two adults (one DBS checked) should be the last to leave a venue once the activity has finished. They will be responsible for ensuring that there are plans in place for people at risk to get home safely.

2.0 Recruitment practices around safeguarding

If an existing or potential new staff member or volunteer will work directly with adults at risk, as part of the M&SCC's activities, the appropriate level of DBS will be requested before that work is undertaken. The level of DBS check required will be decided by the Trustees and committee and in line with DBS rules regarding regulated activity. The results of any check to inform a decision will be used confidentially.

3.0 Named safeguarding person

Samantha DUNCAN has been nominated to hold responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to Samantha DUNCAN in the first instance.

Any projects, events or other activities that involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of Samantha DUNCAN and in line with established procedures.

Trustee lead with responsibility for Safeguarding: Sheila WOODWARD

4.0 Procedures for responding to safeguarding concerns.

If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the named safeguarding officer Samantha DUNCAN, or an individual they trust.

If any member, staff or volunteer in M&SCC witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected case of abuse they should immediately report it to the named safeguarding officer; Samantha DUNCAN.

If the named person is not available, or is involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to another DBS checked adult or the safeguarding lead trustee.

5.0 Procedures for dealing with concerns or incidents of abuse.

The named safeguarding officer and/or the safeguarding lead trustee will make a decision, based on the immediate concerns and the following two factors:

1. If the person at risk is not safe or needs emergency medical attention – **call the police, 111 or ambulance service.**
2. If the person the allegation is made about is working with persons at risk they should be moved to other activities, in a sensitive manner.

If none of the above applies the named person will:

- Make a written report of the concerns raised to them (see Appendix One.)
- Agree with the Safeguarding Trustee how to handle the reported abuse unless they were involved in the incident.
- Escalate the report by either:
 - Raising concerns with the police – for serious or possible criminal offences.
 - Requesting an assessment by the local authority social care department about whether a vulnerable person is in-need of protection.
 - An internal mediation – led by a Trustee/committee chair/or nominated Safeguarding Trustee.

6.0 Resolution and disciplinary action

Any disciplinary action will be led by the trustees, unless otherwise indicated, and taken in line with the M&SCC constitution.

3. Action/s Taken or Planned (to be completed by named safeguarding officer/ safeguarding trustee)

Report received by-Name: _____ Role: _____

Date/Time: _____

| | Actions taken | Planned actions |
|---|--|--|
| Immediate Risk. Describe any immediate risk and how it can be responded to. | Detail: By who: _____ When: _____ | Detail: By who: _____ By when: _____ |
| Consent. Does the person effected agree to reporting of the incident? | Detail: By who: _____ When: _____ | Detail: By who: _____ By when: _____ |
| Reporting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police • Local Authority • Other (provide details). | Detail: By who: _____ By when: _____ | Detail: By who: _____ By when: _____ |
| Longer term mitigation. Give details of any long term mitigation required. | Detail: By who: _____ By when: _____ | Detail: By who: _____ By when: _____ |
| Any additional information/comments: | | |
| Outcome: | | |

Useful Contacts

| | |
|--|---|
| Incident/allegation involving | Report to: |
| Adults who are residents of Lambeth/Southwark -this includes adults who have specific needs i.e. mental health needs or learning disability. | Mind & Soul Community Choir Safeguarding lead or trustee |
| | Police: 101/ 999 |
| | Safeguarding – Local authority Lambeth 020 7926 5868 adultsocialcare@lambeth.gcsx.gov.uk Southwark 020 7525 3324 or safeguardingadultscoordinator@southwark.gov.uk |
| | Sexual Assault referral centre The Haven, Kings College Hospital 020 7346 1599 |
| Mental Health Emergency | Crisis Line (SLaM) 0800 731 2864 (Option 1) 24/7 |
| | |