

Safeguarding Policy

This policy applies to all adults working with young people at or on behalf of Manchester Youth Zone, hereafter referred to as 'staff', including paid employees, freelance and agency workers, unpaid volunteers, placement students, parents/carers and support workers.

Manchester Youth Zone works with children and young people from the age of 8 to 19 and vulnerable adults up to the age of 25 with additional needs/disabilities.

Principles

Manchester Youth Zone takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults entrusted to its care.

As part of the ethos of Manchester Youth Zone the staff and Board are committed to:

- *Encouraging and supporting parents/carers/guardians and working together in partnership with them.*
- *Listening to, relating effectively with, and valuing each individual child, young person or vulnerable adult in our care.*
- *Ensuring that all staff are properly trained and supported.*

We recognise that some children, young people and vulnerable adults today are the victims of neglect and/or physical, sexual or emotional abuse and that staff of Manchester Youth Zone, by virtue of their knowledge and day-to-day contact with these individuals are well placed to identify such abuse and to offer support to those in need.

Safeguarding Procedure

All action taken is in line with the Manchester Safeguarding Partnership (MSP) procedures.

The procedure for responding to suspicions, allegations or evidence of abuse, including those made against members of staff is set out below.

Any member of staff who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it as soon as possible to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, James Dronsfield and complete an MYZ Cause for Concern form (see Record Keeping below).

If the Safeguarding Lead is not on site, then the member of staff must not delay passing on the information but must report it as soon as possible to a senior member of the Youth Work team. They should also leave notification for the Safeguarding Lead r informing them of the situation.

If the suspicions in any way involve a member of staff, then the report should be made in the first instance to the CEO -Richard Marsh. Contact should then be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Manchester, Majella O'Hagan on 0161 274 6211 / 0161 203 3232 or majella.ohagan@manchester.gov.uk.

There will always be differences of professional opinion. However, members of staff have a responsibility to challenge when it is believed that colleagues or other agencies are failing to recognise child maltreatment and/or their response leaves children at risk of significant harm. Where such disagreements arise between practitioners in the same agency, they should report this to the Chief Executive in the first instance. They should also contact the LADO (see above).

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make direct referrals to the local Children's Social Care department or the police. However, we strongly advise members of staff to use the guidelines contained in this policy.

The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The designated Safeguarding Lead shall ensure that they are fully conversant with the MSP Child Protection Procedures and will coordinate action on abuse within Manchester Youth Zone, ensuring that all staff are aware of their own responsibility in relation to safeguarding.

They are responsible for referring individual cases of suspected abuse to children's social care, and for liaising with the social services department and other agencies on these and other general issues relating to safeguarding.

They have responsibility for organising training on all aspects of safeguarding within Manchester Youth Zone and act as a point of reference on safeguarding issues for other staff.

Should the alleged perpetrator of abuse be a member of staff, the designated Safeguarding Lead will consult in line with MSP guidelines.

Guidance for Safer Working Practice

It is important that all staff working with young people understand that the nature of their work and the responsibilities related to it, place them in a position of trust. The guidance below provides a clear outline of appropriate and safe behaviours for all adults working with young people.

Transport

In certain situations, staff may agree to transport members, such as where the member requires transport in an emergency situation or where not doing so may place a child at risk. Best practice is for two members of staff to transport a member. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, prior request should be gained from the Safeguarding Lead or Head of Youth Work. Parental consent must also be gained for members under 16 or those with additional needs.

It is inappropriate for staff to offer lifts to a young person outside their normal working duties, unless this has been brought to the attention of the Safeguarding Lead and has been agreed with the parents/carers.

Staff who use their own vehicles for transporting members should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured (including business insurance) and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

It is a legal requirement that all passengers should wear seat belts and it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that this requirement is met. Staff should also be aware of current legislation and adhere to the use of car seats for younger children. Where staff transport children in a vehicle which requires a specialist license/insurance e.g. PCV or LGV30, they should ensure that they have an appropriate licence and insurance to drive such a vehicle.

Staff are not allowed to book or pay for taxis for members aged under 16 without parental consent, as we cannot guarantee the insurance of the driver, and therefore the safety of the member.

Online Provision

From time to time, staff may be required to deliver sessions and create content using social media platforms. In order to ensure the same standards of safeguarding present within the youth zone, staff should make efforts to ensure guidelines set out by the Safeguarding Lead are met.

During sessions using Zoom, staff must always work in pairs. Sessions should be recorded where possible and young people should be briefed on expectations regarding their behaviour and use of the sessions.

When creating content for Social Media (Facebook, Instagram etc) staff should consider the following, particularly when making video content; staff have prepared the content fully, they are wearing an MYZ t-shirt, the content is appropriate, young people could not identify where the staff member lives (landmarks/shops etc visible content), avoid livestreams where young people add their own content, staff should also ensure the comment section remains appropriate. Full guidelines are available from the Safeguarding Lead in the "guidelines for online engagement" document.

Gifts

It is acknowledged that there may be specific occasions when staff working with a young person may consider it appropriate to give them a small personal gift of insignificant value. This gift should cost a maximum of £5, or be essential in helping meet the young person's needs, in which case best judgement should be used. It is only acceptable practice to give a gift to a young person when the member of staff has first discussed the giving of the gift and the reason for it, with the Safeguarding Lead. This must then be recorded on an MYZ Gift Form. Any gifts should be given openly and not be based on favouritism.

There are occasions when young people or their parents/carers may wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example on special occasions or as a thank you, and this is acceptable. However, staff must inform the Safeguarding Lead and complete an MYZ Gift Form if they receive a gift. It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value, and parents must be informed if a young person buys a gift worth more than £5 for a member of staff.

Physical Contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for staff to have physical contact with members, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and will in some circumstances be inappropriate, however the general culture of 'limited touch' should be adapted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each young person. When physical contact is made with members this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, and background. If staff feel they have needed to enforce physical intervention then they must add, in detail, what they did and the reason why on an MYZ Incident Form. This will help ensure that we can appropriately safeguard our staff from false or misleading allegations.

Appropriate physical contact at Manchester Youth Zone will occur most often with younger members, for example there may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance and this may involve physical contact. Young children may need immediate physical comfort, for example after a fall or on separation from parent. Staff should use their professional judgement to comfort or reassure a young person in an age-appropriate way whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries.

Physical contact should never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Lead. Physical contact, which occurs regularly with an individual member, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to young people with additional needs). Any such contact should be the subject of an agreed and open plan and subject to review.

Manchester Youth Zone acknowledges that some members with additional needs are more tactile, wanting to hug or 'high five' members of staff. Such young people are often taught that hugs are not appropriate at school as they may put themselves at risk by hugging strangers. Manchester Youth Zone does not want to confuse these young people by sending them mixed messages. Therefore, in line with what is taught in schools; hugs are for friends and family only, staff members are NOT their friend so must not hug a young person as a greeting, as this is putting them at potential risk. It is appropriate to 'high five' a young person in place of a hug.

It is recognised that some young people may seek inappropriate physical contact. Staff should be particularly aware of this especially when it is known that a young person has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In all circumstances where a member initiates inappropriate physical contact, it is the responsibility of the member of staff to sensitively deter the child and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such circumstances must always be reported and discussed with the Safeguarding Officer.

Personal Care

Personal care is a service that we at Manchester Youth Zone do not offer. Although we appreciate members may need escorting to and from the toilet, staff should be aware that they are NOT to enter the toilet with a young person at any time. If it is unavoidable (incidents where the young person is hurt or injured in the toilets), staff must ensure that they have the support of another member of staff when handling events such as this.

Contact with Members Outside of Manchester Youth Zone

Manchester Youth Zone recognises that some staff and volunteers will already have prior relationships with our members, such as a sibling or family friend. Where this is the case, staff must complete an MYZ Declaration of Relationship form so that the Safeguarding Officer for staff is aware of any existing relationships.

If a staff member encounters a young person whilst outside of Manchester Youth Zone provision, it is recommended that they do not engage with the young person other than to make brief conversation and then continue with their plans. This is to maintain the professional boundary between staff and members.

If a staff member spends a prolonged period of time with a young person outside of Manchester Youth Zone provision, they must complete an MYZ Declaration of Encounter form so that the Safeguarding Lead is aware of this contact. This is to safeguard both our young people and staff from any false or misleading allegations being made. For example, if a staff member encounters a member whilst on a night out in a bar, we recommend they avoid spending time with the young person and instead, leave and go to a different venue. This guidance is not intended to be restrictive, but instead aims to prevent the young person or any witnesses from making allegations about any contact that they had together. In this situation the member of staff must inform the Safeguarding Lead about this contact the next time they attend work by completing an MYZ Declaration of Encounter form.

Appropriate Contact with Members

Below is a table which outlines the forms of contact with our members which are appropriate and those which are not appropriate. A copy of this table can also be found in the Electronic Information & Communications (ICT) Systems Policy and the Social Media Policy.

Personal Mobile	Phone ✗	Text ✗	Whatsapp ✗	
Work Mobile	Phone ✓	Text ✓	Whatsapp ✗	
Social Media	MYZ Facebook ✓	Personal Facebook ✗	Personal Twitter ✗	Personal Instagram/Snapchat ✗
Face to Face	Outside MYZ ✓	In a bar/pub ✗	At home ✗	Room alone ✗
Email	MYZ email ✓		Personal email ✗	

Images and Videos

It is accepted that there may be times when staff will have images or videos of young people on their personal devices, whether it is for projects or from residential trips. However, all members of staff must declare this using an MYZ Declaration of Images form, which will include the purpose of the photographs and confirmation of deletion, another member of staff must be shown that images have been deleted. This however is not the case for young people who do not have permission to be photographed, under no circumstances should these young people be photographed on personal or MYZ devices. Any sensitive information such as those young people without photo consent, can be found on Salesforce or by speaking to the Safeguarding Lead for confirmation.

Former Staff

We recommend that all former staff avoid entering a personal relationship with any current or former members after leaving their position at Manchester Youth Zone. Any such relationship could be perceived to have started whilst the staff member was working with the young person in a position of trust and therefore, could potentially be seen as grooming and could put the staff member’s professional reputation and career at risk.

Working with Other Agencies

Manchester Youth Zone recognises that it is an agent of referral and not of investigation for instances of disclosure or concerns for young people. It fully accepts that the investigation of child abuse is the responsibility of the social services department and the police and will do everything possible to support and assist them in their task.

We will endeavour to build relationships with other agencies so that understanding, trust and confidence can be built which will help to secure effective co-operation in cases of actual or suspected abuse.

We will request access to information on Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all third-party agency and support workers not directly engaged by Manchester Youth Zone. A letter will be sent to the agency outlining the

standards we expect of workers and requesting recent DBS information for any staff they send to Manchester Youth Zone, so that only appropriate staff are sent to work with our members. All third-party workers must sign in at reception and wear their ID badge from their agency, as well as a temporary ID badge from Manchester Youth Zone. Third-party workers must also read and sign documentation stating MYZ expectations during their presence on site.

If there is a disagreement between agencies, such as differing views about whether certain behaviour constitutes maltreatment, or whether particular circumstances warrant a child protection response, Manchester Youth Zone will follow MSP's Escalation Procedure, which can be found in the Safeguarding folder (see Record Keeping below).

For further specific guidance on Manchester Youth Zone's stance on liaising with the police, please refer to our separate MYZ Working with the Police Policy.

Record Keeping

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse, must make notes as soon as possible (e.g. within an hour) on an MYZ Cause for Concern form, writing down as exactly as possible, what was said or seen, putting the scene into context, and giving the time and location. Dates and times of events should be recorded as accurately as possible, together with a note of when the record was made. The MYZ Cause for Concern form must be signed by the Lead Staff on session and stored in a locked draw/cabinet until being passed to the Safeguarding Lead at the earliest convenience.

Upon receiving an MYZ Cause for Concern form, the Safeguarding Lead will take appropriate action, such as speaking to the young person, ringing parents/carers or school, or completing a referral to social services.

On some occasions additional information will be required, and staff may be asked to follow up with the young person and complete an MYZ Cause for Concern Follow Up form, which must be signed by the Lead Staff on session. The Lead Staff member will pass this to the Safeguarding Lead for further action to be taken if necessary.

In addition to the MYZ Cause for Concern form, there is an MYZ Significant Event form. This should be completed when we are made aware of any major life events which occur for our young people e.g. new baby in the family, family bereavement, parents split/divorce, entering/leaving social care or being moved between carers. The purpose of this is to help to form a chronology of a specific young person's domestic circumstances and further enhance our knowledge of why a young person may be acting unusually so we can provide the best support possible.

All records of a safeguarding nature should be handed to the designated Safeguarding Lead and will be kept securely. Paper copies of all documents will be stored in a locked filing cabinet, and electronic records will be stored on the secure, cloud based database, Salesforce, requiring a password for access. Access to these records is on a 'need to know' basis and decisions about access will be made by the Safeguarding Lead and Chief Executive. All hand-written notes will be kept, even if they are subsequently typed up in a more formal report.

All safeguarding procedures and Manchester Youth Zone are in line with those set out by Manchester Safeguarding Partnership (MSP).

Support

For any young person undergoing a safeguarding referral and investigation, the need for support will be great and quite often Manchester Youth Zone will be limited in the support we can offer. We aim to meet the need for support whenever possible, but we aim at least to provide a secure environment in which all feel valued and protected.

The Safeguarding Lead will endeavour to make themselves available to discuss individual situations with concerned members of staff at the earliest convenience.

Manchester Youth Zone will offer support where possible to the family of a young person involved in a safeguarding investigation, within the time and expertise constraints of its role and always remembering the limits of confidentiality on all members of staff and the fact that it is the welfare of the young person that is paramount.

Recruitment

Manchester Youth Zone requests Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all staff directly engaged by Manchester Youth Zone for safer recruitment. Please refer to our Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy for further information on how recruitment decisions are managed for any staff who have criminal convictions, cautions or other notes from the police on their record.

Manchester Youth Zone has taken the decision to restrict recruitment for paid employment opportunities to exclude current and former members and regular service users for a period of not less than one year since they last attended. Safeguarding is the utmost priority of the organisation and the risks associated with employing members who are currently or have been recently under our duty of care are too great and too complex to reasonably manage. Prioritising safeguarding in this instance constitutes an objective justification to restrict recruitment in this way. For further information, refer to our Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Training

The designated Safeguarding Lead shall attend MSP Safeguarding training events as appropriate as well as other training from organisation relevant to the role.

All staff will complete online safeguarding training within one month of being in post or provide evidence of having completed equivalent training within the last 12 months, as approved by the Safeguarding Lead. All staff will also complete Manchester Youth Zone's in-house safeguarding training within one month of being in post. All volunteers and volunteer mentors will complete safeguarding training as part of the training for their role.

All staff shall have access to appropriate training on a regular basis. Additional training courses offered by MSP will be advertised and staff will be encouraged to attend to develop their wider understanding.

The Role of Manchester Youth Zone Board

Manchester Youth Zone's Board will approve changes to safeguarding policies and procedures and be kept fully informed of any incidents/cases which require Board intervention, in the interests of protecting members, staff, visitors or The MYZ's safety or reputation.

Version: MYZ Safeguarding Policy – Reviewed and Updated August 2020 (James Dronsfield – Senior Safeguarding & Interventions Manager)

GENERATION

