

Safeguarding Policy

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Agreed by SLT: October 2021

Agreed by Prayer & People Sub Committee: October 2021

Agreed by MAF UK Board of Trustees: December 2021

This policy is non-contractual and as such can be changed at any time as required by regulations or best practice.

1. Scope

This policy applies to anyone who represents MAF UK including staff (part-time, full-time, paid or unpaid), interns, consultants, people on secondment to MAF UK, volunteers and trustees. (Collectively referred to as **staff** in this policy).

2. MAF UK commitments

MAF UK 's Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees are committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are protected from all forms of harm and abuse, enabling them to live life with dignity, respect and security. All staff who work for, or with, MAF UK must ensure that their behaviour promotes and encourages freedom from:

- Harm and Abuse (physical, sexual and emotional)
- Exploitation and abuse (physical, sexual and economic)
- Neglect
- Discrimination
- Human Trafficking

MAF UK is committed to:

- Valuing children and vulnerable adults
- Listening to, and acting upon, allegations and concerns relating to abuse and exploitation
- Creating a culture of openness to enable issues and concerns about safeguarding to be raised and discussed
- Forming a sense of accountability between staff so that potential poor or abusive behaviour can be challenged and prevented
- Providing appropriate, on-going safeguarding training for staff and regularly reviewing the standards and guidelines in this policy
- Appointing and supporting a Safeguarding Officer in any action they may need to take to protect children and vulnerable adults.

MAF UK is committed to:

A **zero tolerance** policy approach to the abuse and exploitation of children and vulnerable adults. Where a case is raised the Safeguarding Officer or their appointee will collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and, if appropriate, pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate. If there is a case to be answered it will be dealt with under the disciplinary policy (this may lead to the termination of the employment contract for gross misconduct) and if appropriate forwarded to the police.

3. Definitions

Child:

A child is anyone under the age of 18

Vulnerable Adults:

A vulnerable adult is anyone over the age of 18 who by reason of disability, age, illness, or circumstance has need for care and support or who may be unable to take care of or unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect. Further a vulnerable adult is unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights, or other interests, are at risk of harm, and because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected. Vulnerability cannot be defined by one factor - such as age, health or location - but often occurs as a response to external changes. The vulnerability may last for a few days, months or be permanent. For example, bereavement, a change in financial situation, or physical or mental illness. A vulnerable adult may also include beneficiaries who, because of extreme poverty or desperation, are more susceptible to exploitation and abuse.

Abuse:

While definitions of abuse vary these have been written using recognised international sources. However, MAF UK will be guided by legal definitions as appropriate in the United Kingdom.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is the involvement of a child or vulnerable adult in sexual activity with another adult which includes but is not limited to:

- a) Verbal: Remarks which include sexual threats, innuendoes, solicitation or sexually explicit language; inappropriate comments about a person's body or appearance or any verbal expression with intent to arouse or stimulate
- b) Visual: Indecent exposure, showing, making, taking or sending suggestive or pornographic pictures or films; showing a child or vulnerable adult pornographic material, unclothed persons, or any sexual activity or simulated sexual activity such as masturbation or intercourse; peeping, leering, or staring; or viewing child pornography.
- c) Physical touching: Physical contact with a child or vulnerable adults' genitals, pubic area, buttocks, breasts or causing a child or vulnerable adult to perform any of these acts: masturbation; rubbing, holding or kissing for sexual gratification.
- d) Exploitation: Sexually exploiting a child or vulnerable adult for money, power or status
- e) Online: Sending or posting sexually explicit images of themselves, children and vulnerable adults, or engaging in sexually explicit online conversations

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately hurting a child or vulnerable adult which may cause injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns and cuts. It isn't accidental - those who are physically abused suffer violence such as being hit, kicked, poisoned, burned, slapped or having objects thrown at them.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is a pattern of behaviour that risks or impairs the physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social wellbeing of an individual. It may involve conveying that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed or involve causing children and vulnerable persons to frequently feel frightened or in danger, exploitation or corruption. Those who are emotionally abused are often suffering from other types of abuse at the

same time.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's or vulnerable persons basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health, development or wellbeing. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failing to protect them from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's or vulnerable persons basic emotional needs.

4. The purpose of this policy

This policy is designed to provide guidance on;

- the importance of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults,
- acceptable and unacceptable behaviour,
- staff responsibilities both in and outside the work environment and
- how to report.

5. Standards

MAF UK is committed to ensuring that the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults is given paramount consideration. This policy is based on principles encapsulated within:

- UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, its optional protocols (on Worst Forms of Child Labour; Forced Recruitment), and other international child-rights and human-rights instruments
- Safeguarding standards published by thirtyone: eight
- All relevant national laws of England, Scotland and Wales as MAF UK is a registered charity within this jurisdiction., particularly the Children Act 1989 (and its various amendments), Children Act (Scotland) 1995, the Protection of Children Act 2004 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 among others.

6. Indicators of possible abuse

Physical indicators

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Instances where children are kept away from the group inappropriately
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures, etc. which do not have an accidental explanation
- Cutting/slashing/substance abuse

Sexual indicators

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse

- Child with excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Child who is frightened of or avoids being alone with a particular individual

Emotional indicators

- Changes or regression in mood and behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- Depression/aggression
- Nervousness/frozen watchfulness
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and /or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying

Neglect indicators

- Consistent hunger
- Poor hygiene
- Inappropriate dress
- Consistent lack of supervision, especially in dangerous activities for long periods
- Unattended physical problems or medical needs
- Abandonment

7. Safeguarding awareness

MAF UK is committed to appropriate safeguarding training for staff. All staff receive a copy of the Safeguarding policy during induction and are required to undergo regular refresher training. Supporter Relations staff, MIC staff, Youth staff and volunteers will also receive a copy of the Vulnerable People Policy relating to communications involved with support raising, the Volunteers Conduct Policy (where appropriate) and bespoke training as appropriate on a regular basis.

The Board of Trustees Safeguarding Lead and the MAF UK Safeguarding Officer will both receive annual safeguarding training through an appropriate provider.

8. Reporting

Any allegation or concern regarding the abuse or exploitation of a child or vulnerable adult will be treated seriously and with urgency. **Reporting concerns regarding the abuse or exploitation of children or vulnerable adults is mandatory** and can arise when abusive behaviour is observed or suspected; or when an allegation is made or disclosed or there are indicators (signs and symptoms) of suspected abuse on the victim.

What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred:

- Staff should not under any circumstances carry out their own investigation

- Report concerns as soon as possible to the MAF UK Safeguarding Officer (or in their absence the UK HR Manager) who will liaise with thirty-one: eight regarding process.
- Staff will be asked to make a written record of their concerns which will be kept in a secure location.
- **Alternatively**, staff may contact their local Social Services in the area where the incident has taken place or is being reported or, outside office hours, contact the local police (Child Protection Team)

In Kent the contact numbers are:

Children's Social Services: Call 03000 41 11 11 (text relay 18001 03000 41 11 11) or email social.services@kent.gov.uk

Adult Social Services: Call 03000 41 61 61 (text relay 18001 03000 41 61 61) or email social.services@kent.gov.uk

If staff need to contact Social Services outside of normal office hours, for example during the night, call 03000 41 91 91.

IF YOU THINK SOMEONE IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, CALL 999 FOR THE EMERGENCY SERVICES.

You should not discuss your concerns with anyone other than those mentioned above

The Safeguarding Officer or their delegate will inform the CEO and will take advice and guidance from thirtyone:eight and refer the case to Social Services, or the Police as required. The CEO will inform the Board of Trustees -Safeguarding lead and MAF's insurer.

It is the right of any staff member to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from thirtyone:eight if they feel MAF UK has not responded appropriately to any allegation. We hope by making this statement that MAF UK demonstrates its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

9. Safeguarding Officer

The MAF UK SAFEGUARDING OFFICER IS: THE HEAD OF HR.

The role of the safeguarding officer /delegate is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

10.Guidelines on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour

All MAF UK staff are required to understand and abide by the rules of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour when working with children or vulnerable people. These rules are designed to protect children or vulnerable adults and to protect MAF UK staff from false accusations. Staff should avoid actions or behaviour that could constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour

Acceptable Behaviour

Staff should:

- Create a culture of openness and accountability allowing issues or concerns to be raised and discussed and where abusive behaviour can be challenged.
- Conduct a risk analysis when organising activities and programmes involving children or vulnerable people, with the view to plan for ways to reduce the risk of harm
- To reduce the risks of working alone with a child or vulnerable person, apply the 'two-adult' rule or ensure that you and the child or vulnerable person is visible to others
- Ensure physical contact is always appropriate and not an invasion of the child's or vulnerable person's privacy
- Use positive, non-violent methods to manage the child's or vulnerable person's behaviour
- Raise any concerns of inappropriate behaviour immediately

Unacceptable Behaviour

Staff must not:

- Develop a physical or sexual relationship with a child or vulnerable person
- Behave physically in a way which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Spend time alone with a child or vulnerable person, away from others, behind closed doors or in a secluded area
- Take a child or vulnerable person to their home or visit a child or vulnerable person at their home, where they may be alone. Allow a child or vulnerable person to stay overnight at their home unsupervised or sleep in the same room or bed as that child or vulnerable person
- Do things of a personal nature for a child or vulnerable person
- Engage in sexual activity with a child or vulnerable person regardless of the age of consent locally (the mistaken age of a child or vulnerable person is not a defence)
- Be intoxicated as a result of alcohol or drug usage, prior to assuming responsibility for a child or vulnerable person
- Hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse a child or vulnerable person, even where this may be culturally acceptable
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice, which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
- Condone, or participate in behaviour with a child or a vulnerable person which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, degrade or perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
- Show favouritism to a particular child or vulnerable person to the exclusion of others - for example, promising gifts, support and enticements.
- Exploit a child or vulnerable person for their labour - domestic servants - or for sexual purposes.
- Take a child or vulnerable person alone in a vehicle unless it is appropriate given the context and with parental/guardian or managerial consent.
- Conduct or be part of a harmful traditional practice, spiritual or ritualistic abuse.

11. Recruitment and Selection

MAF UK will take the following actions when recruiting and selecting staff to ensure that the right people are employed – not only in terms of skills but also with regards to behaviour, attitudes and safeguarding.

- **Job descriptions** will refer to responsibilities for Safeguarding and the Code of Conduct
- During **shortlisting** all gaps, discrepancies or anomalies in CV's will be scrutinised
- Questions will be asked about safeguarding in the **interview** process
- **Checks** regarding candidate's identity, employment history and qualifications will be carried out before appointment
- Professional and pastoral **references** will be obtained
- **Self-declaration** – Candidates will be asked to declare criminal convictions, written warnings, dismissal, or resignations following allegations of improper or unprofessional conduct or unsatisfactory work performance.

12. Enhanced DBS checks

As a matter of policy, staff do not accept responsibility for children or potentially vulnerable adults at events. We may however request an enhanced DBS or Disclosure Scotland PVG check during recruitment or throughout employment where appropriate or required.

As MAF UK carries out work targeted at children or potentially vulnerable adults Trustees are eligible for enhanced checks and are therefore required to undergo an enhanced DBS or Disclosure Scotland PVG check on recruitment and at the appropriate renewal dates.

13. Partners

Where MAF UK contributes financially to international partners we will take measures to ensure that we have a shared understanding of safe practice in interaction with children and potentially vulnerable adults. This will include the requirement for a copy of their Safeguarding Policy, an indication of reporting mechanisms and details of their safeguarding lead.

14. Volunteers

MAF UK Volunteers must not under any circumstances take supervisory responsibility for, or be left alone, with any groups whether they be children or adults. Churches and groups always retain responsibility, for the supervision of their group and MAF representatives are guest speakers only.

15. Children visiting the Folkestone and Glasgow Office

When children visit MAF UK offices they remain the responsibility of parents. MAF UK staff may however be asked to supervise children while their parents are involved in meetings and interviews. This must in all cases take place in public areas or in rooms with the doors open and clearly visible.

Staff must not accompany children to toilets nor change their clothing or nappies; this remains a parental responsibility.

16. Events

Where MAF UK staff are asked to assist with events they must ensure that they adhere to this policy and under no circumstance spend time alone with or touch children. Staff should not accept supervisory responsibility for children.

17. Other related policies

Whistleblowing and Disclosures Policy - An important aspect of accountability and transparency is a mechanism to enable staff and other people associated with MAF UK to voice concerns in a responsible and effective manner.

Fundraising and Vulnerable People Guidelines – Specific guidance for those interacting with supporters who may be open to exploitation.

Conduct Policy – Guidance on the expected behaviours both in and outside of work expected of representatives of a Christian Mission.

The Misconduct Policy and Procedure – A statement of the process and possible sanctions following misconduct.

The Social Media Policy – A statement of staff responsibility and practice when engaging with children and vulnerable adults using social media platforms.