

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

April 2025

Contact details

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DETAILS OF THE ORGANISATION

Manna Family

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide safe, positive and empowering environment for all people who engage in projects, programmes and events organised directly by it, or in partnership with other organisations. We believe that the safety and well-being of young people and vulnerable adults is paramount and that all people have the right to protection from abuse, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity.

This safeguarding policy is in place to ensure that we do everything we are able to ensure the safety and protection of young people and vulnerable adults involved with our projects and events.

For the purposes of this policy, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18. For the purposes of this policy, vulnerable adults are defined as anyone over the age of 18 who requires activities which lead to them being considered vulnerable to significant harm or exploitation at that particular time.

A vulnerable adult can be anyone:

- Who receives social care services or personal care
- Who requires assistance in relation to general household matters such as paying bills, shopping etc. due to a physical or sensory impairment, learning disability or mental health problem
- Who is detained by His Majesty's Government or in contact with probation services

All Children/Vulnerable Adults who connect with Manna have the right to:

- **Feel safe**
- **Be treated with respect and dignity**
- We are committed to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults
- We recognise that child/vulnerable adult protection is everybody's responsibility
- We are committed to following the agreed procedures and following statutory, denominational and specialist guidelines
- We review this policy annually

Role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator

The role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator includes:

- Overseeing the preparation and implementation of the Safeguarding policy and ensuring that it is regularly reviewed
- Establishing contact with organisations.
- Being aware of local Safeguarding procedures
- Ensuring that Safeguarding policies and procedures are followed
- Maintaining accurate records relating to Safeguarding concerns
- Making sure that staff members and leaders receive adequate Safeguarding training where required
- Ensuring that all our staff involved in the recruitment process are aware of this policy and have received relevant training and support.
- Ensuring that a copy of this policy is provided to any group working with Manna theatre company.

This position is currently undertaken by Gary crick who can be contacted by telephone on 07596096319 and by email at, gary@mannafamily.uk

PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

There are a variety of approaches required to ensure an effective preventative strategy. These include:

- *Creating the right environment.*
Work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication). If a staff member needs to work with a young person on a 1:1 basis this should be done in a public space, or if this is not appropriate, in a room with the door left open.
- *Developing practice standards.*
Sharing information about child protection and good practice to ensure that all staff have awareness of the issues which can cause harm to young people and that all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- *Empowering young persons and staff.*
Treat children and young people equally and with respect and dignity. Put the welfare of children and young people first. Strive to build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children and young people to share in the decision-making process.
- *Providing effective management for all staff through supervision, support and training.*
Ensure confidentiality of information in order to protect the rights of all staff and young people, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any information provided for a project (Data Protection Act 1998).

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Staff members should treat all participants with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.
- Always consider the best interests and the specific requirements of the people that we are working with.
- Note that physical contact is appropriate in certain situations/workshops. Always be guided by those we are working with. Let them initiate contact where possible and appropriate.
- Consider the particular needs due to religious, cultural, disability or ethnic background.
- Give due consideration to the words that are used and the tone of voice used in sessions.
- Consideration should be given whether a male and/or female worker should be involved. There should always be 2 staff members present at all times where possible. NEVER BE ALONE WITH A CHILD/VULNERABLE ADULT.
- Have a clear strategy for summoning additional adult help (if needed).
- The level of personal care (e.g. toileting) must be appropriate and related to the age of the child/disabled adult whilst also accepting that some participants have special needs. This should always be done by a support worker/parent.
- The privacy of participants should be respected, avoiding questionable activity such as rough or sexually provocative games and comments.
- No person under 16 years of age can meet with an adult for a counselling situation on their own, there must always be another adult present. That situation should still be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and written up.
- Bullying: We will not tolerate bullying in any form, including physical, verbal, emotional, damage to property or theft, intimidation through gesture and threat, both verbal and non-verbal, cyber through a range of technologies – mobile phones, email and social networks, or exclusion or non-communication.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS

If a member of staff suspects abuse has occurred they should consider the context of the situation and report the matter according to the following guidelines. In all cases a staff member should listen, accept, reassure, explain, act immediately, record and get support.

Do ensure action is taken. It is not the responsibility of the Manna team member to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT

Individuals and organisations commissioned by us or working in partnership with us cannot use film and photography without the consent of the participating groups. Staff should only take and store photographs of young persons with their formal consent and use them for specific purposes (eg. feedback/publicity). Young persons and their parents/carers should be made aware of how images will be used and stored.

GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS

In any case where someone Manna has concerns about or an allegation is made, a record will be made using a standardised format [Appendix 1]. Details must include:

- Name of child/ vulnerable adult
- Date of birth of child/ vulnerable adult (if available)
- Approximate age of child/ vulnerable adult if date of birth is not available
- Name of staff member completing the form
- Date the incident took place
- Time the incident took place
- Location the incident took place
- Names of others involved, or others who witnessed the incident
- Details of the incident as a statement of fact
- Action taken
- Were the parents informed?

The record must then be signed by the completing person and the designated Safeguarding Officer.

DISCLOSURE

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as protection of vulnerable beneficiaries will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Ensure you never use closed questioning or leading questions
- Offer him / her reassurance without making promises, and take what is said seriously.
- Allow the child to speak without interruption, accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.

- Do not overreact or respond with emotive language.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
- Advise that you will offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
- Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event, use the child's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the child was trying to say.
- Contact one of Manna Theatre company personnel for advice / guidance.
- Record any discussions or actions taken as soon as is practicable.

REFERRAL

For allegations of sexual abuse or physical injury, contact the Social Work Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Safeguarding Team direct.

RECORD-KEEPING

- All records, information and confidential notes should be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or filing cabinet.
- Only the designated Persons will have access to these files.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

We review this policy annually and after each annual review, the Policy will be shared with current and incoming staff members, so updates within the Policy are known and upheld by all staff and volunteers.

This policy is accompanied by three appendixes.

This policy will be reviewed annually and will be signed off

Next review date: April 2026