

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Procedures

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These procedures apply to all teaching, non-teaching, contract and volunteer staff – safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of **all**. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children.

This document should be read alongside '[Keeping children safe in education 2024](#)' and the following policies:

- [Anti-Bullying](#)
- [Health and Safety](#)
- [e-Safety](#)
- [Whistleblowing](#)
- [Staff Standards](#)
- [Complaints](#)

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## **Purpose**

These procedures provide clear direction to staff and others about expected behaviour in dealing with child protection issues. They also make explicit the commitment to the development of good practice and sound internal procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns and

referrals may be handled sensitively and professionally; staff should always act in the best interests of the child.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined by the DfE (KCSiE, 2024) as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

### **Pmf Aims And Objectives**

The Pimlico Musical Foundation:

- Provides a music education for children from disadvantaged backgrounds; we believe in music as a vehicle to overcome social inequality and connect people
- Is committed to equal opportunities
- Does not operate with any faith biases and is non-political

We believe and treat all as equal, and seek to provide the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.

In order to protect and safeguard children at PMF, there is an emphasis on:

- Prevention through a positive and open atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to participants
- Protection through following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are appropriately recruited, trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns
- Support for children who may have been abused

### **Organisation**

All adults working with, or on behalf of, children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote

the welfare of children. There are, however, key individuals who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures.

The role of the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership:

- Be responsible for investigating and taking appropriate action, including reporting back to PMF when referrals are made due to concerns regarding child protection

The role of the trustees:

- Be familiar with these procedures and the PMF [Staff Code of Conduct](#)
- Ensure that Safer Recruitment procedures are followed when recruiting new members of staff
- Ensure staff have read and understand these procedures and the PMF [Staff Code of Conduct](#)

The role of the trustee lead for safeguarding:

- Be responsible for the leadership and management of safeguarding policies and procedures
- Ensure that procedures are followed to make a referral to the DBS if a person has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been if they had not resigned

The role of the DSL:

- Ensure that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are embedded in PMF
- Lead or organise safeguarding and child protection training
- Receive referrals, and liaise both internally with trustees and staff and externally with agencies in regard to child protection
- Record concerns and reports from members of staff
- Record any concerns from staff which result in a referral and the outcome of that referral
- Report anonymous information and statistics to the Trustees
- Keep copies of child protection records secure and confidential
- Keep copies of child protection records in PMF premises for the required amount of time, even when a child is no longer with PMF
- Respond appropriately where a child has gone missing during PMF activities, especially where this happens repeatedly
- Ensure that an up to date list of new arrivals and participants leaving PMF's activities is

maintained

- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the DBS
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff and volunteers
- Create an ethos of trust – listen to staff concerns (about participants, staff, parents and carers)
- Ensure PMF holds and maintains a Single Central Record of vetting checks that comply with statutory safeguarding requirements
- Ensure staff have read and understand these procedures and the Staff Code of Conduct (which includes staff/participant relationships and communications, including the use of social media)
- Ensure that parents and carers are informed about PMF's duties and responsibilities regarding safeguarding and child protection by ensuring that the PMF website is kept up to date
- Ensure that safer recruitment procedures are followed when recruiting new staff and volunteers and visitors are appropriately supervised, particularly if they do not have DBS checks

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Advisors (DSAs):

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for the DSL

The role of all members of staff:

- Identify and report concerns, possible or actual instances of abuse to the DSL (using the [all-safeguarding Slack channel](#) and/or the [Incident Report Form](#))
- Not promise confidentiality and always act in the interests of the child
- Deliver the activities of PMF to support the safeguarding of children
- Ensure that the child's voice is heard and that all children are able to express their views and give feedback
- [Contact the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) directly in exceptional or emergency situations
- Be aware of appropriate staff/participant relationships and communications at all times - staff should not use social media to communicate with participants

Consideration and support will be provided for staff where appropriate, so that personal or professional difficulties do not get in the way of protecting children.

Staff and volunteers are advised to avoid situations where allegations may be made against

them and are advised against working one-to-one with children except, eg, for instrumental tuition.

### **Procedures to follow if a child makes a disclosure**

It is vital that staff and volunteers never guarantee confidentiality to a child as other people may need to be informed and involved. If a child asks a member of staff to keep a secret, the child should be informed sensitively that this cannot be guaranteed. Staff and volunteers should follow these guidelines if they receive a disclosure:

- Allow the child to tell you what they want to say in their own time
- Don't interrupt unless you need clarification
- Don't lead or prompt the child's disclosure
- Reassure the child about what you will do next
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Write your concerns down as soon as you can (using the [Incident Report Form](#) where possible)
- Report your concerns to the DSL urgently

### **Procedures to follow if a member of staff is concerned about the welfare or safety of a child**

- Record the concern using the [Incident Report Form](#)
- The concern should record precisely what the child has said. No interpretations should be made about the concern

### **What staff/volunteers should do if they have concerns about another member of staff/volunteer**

If staff or volunteers have concerns about another staff member or volunteer, then this should be referred to the DSL. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in PMF's safeguarding regime to the Chair of Trustees; these concerns will be taken seriously. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the Chair of Trustees, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, see the [whistleblowing policy](#).

NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline – 0800 028 0285 / [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## **Peer-on-peer Abuse**

Staff and volunteers should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and we follow procedures to minimise this.

Peer-on-peer abuse is most likely to include, but not limited to:

- Bullying (including cyber bullying)
- Gender based violence/sexual assaults
- Sexting

Abuse should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. The PMF aims and objectives ([see above](#)), ethos and [Anti-Bullying Policy](#) ensures that the possibilities of peer-on-peer abuse are minimised. Staff who have concerns about peer-on-peer abuse should follow the Anti-Bullying Policy and where appropriate speak to the DSL.

The DSL will ensure that the allegations of abuse are investigated. If an allegation of abuse is confirmed, appropriate support is given to the victim/s.

## **Professional Confidentiality**

Individual safeguarding and child protection concerns are confidential. All child protection documentation involving individual participants are kept in a secure online location. Only members of staff who need to be informed are informed of such concerns. Staff will be given 'need to know' information and not necessarily all details linked to the case. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to inform other members of staff about some aspects of an open case.

Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them; this has been recognised in principle by the courts. Any disclosure of personal information to others (including to social service departments) must always have regard to both common and statute law. In some circumstances, obtaining consent may not be possible or in the best interest of the child. The law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) must be informed of any allegation made against a member of staff.

## **Supporting Participants at Risk**

PMF may be one of the few stable, secure, and predictable elements in the lives of children at risk. Their behaviour may be challenging and defiant and there may even be moves to consider suspension or exclusion from PMF activities. It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

We will endeavour to support children through:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-motivation
- Robust online and e-Safety policies and guidance
- The PMF culture and ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all participants and adults a sense of being respected and valued
- Opportunities for children to share concerns
- The implementation of clear and consistent behaviour strategies
- A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays
- Regular liaison with the schools that support the children and their families
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's interests to do so
- The development and support of responsive and knowledgeable staff trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties, special educational needs and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. PMF staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment, and/or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. It must also be stressed that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, or mental health issues, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

## **Specific Safeguarding Issues**

All staff and volunteers should have an awareness of safeguarding issues – some of which are listed below. Staff and volunteers should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse and sexting put children in danger. Staff and volunteers should also be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer-on-peer abuse ([see above](#)).

Staff and volunteers can also find up to date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues such as: bullying (including cyberbullying); child missing from home or care; domestic violence; drugs; fabricated or induced illness; faith abuse; gangs and youth violence; gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG); hate; mental health; missing children and adults strategy; private fostering; relationship abuse; sexting and trafficking on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

There are some signs often associated with particular types of child abuse and neglect: physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse. Further information about these categories can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse that occurs when an individual or group manipulates, coerces, or deceives a child into sexual activity for personal gain, which may include financial benefit, power, or status. CSE can occur online or offline and often involves physical and emotional exploitation. It is vital to recognize that children cannot consent to their exploitation, even if they appear to engage willingly. Indicators of CSE include unexplained gifts, frequent absences from education, and relationships with older individuals. Staff should report any concerns to the DSL.

[Further guidance on CSE](#)

### **So-called 'Honour-based' Violence (HBV)**

HBV encompasses practices that aim to preserve the "honour" of a family or community, such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and breast ironing. All forms of HBV are considered child abuse and should be treated as such. Staff should remain vigilant and report concerns to the DSL or directly to children's social care in emergencies.

[Multi-agency guidance on HBV](#)

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM involves altering or injuring female genital organs for non-medical reasons and is illegal in the UK. It can cause severe physical and psychological harm. Teachers and regulated professionals have a legal duty under Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 to report known cases involving girls under 18 to the police. Risk indicators include:

- A family history of FGM
- A child mentioning a "special procedure" or trip abroad
- Withdrawn behavior from PSHE education or reluctance to engage with professionals

Staff should report concerns immediately to the DSL and involve social care where appropriate.

[Detailed guidance on FGM](#)

### **Forced Marriage**



Forcing someone into marriage is a criminal offense. Forced marriage involves coercion, threats, or abuse to force an individual to marry without their full consent. Vulnerable children may not be able to consent, especially those with learning disabilities. Staff should be aware of warning signs, such as sudden changes in behavior or talk of travel to a country where forced marriage is prevalent, and report concerns promptly.

[Forced Marriage Guidance](#)

### **Online Safety**

With the increasing use of digital platforms, online safety has become a key safeguarding issue. Risks include exposure to harmful content, online grooming, and cyberbullying. PMF ensures that staff and children are educated about online risks and use appropriate filters and monitoring systems.

[UK Council for Internet Safety Resources](#)

Signed: Felix Martin (trustee lead for safeguarding), February 2025

Next update: February 2026

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Overview of Abuse**

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. It may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can occur in family, institutional, or community settings and may involve individuals known to the child or strangers (e.g., via the internet). Both adults and other children can perpetrate abuse.

All children have basic needs, including:

- Physical care and protection
- Emotional support and approval
- Developmentally appropriate stimulation and encouragement
- Consistent, age-appropriate discipline and boundaries
- Opportunities to build self-esteem, confidence, independence, and responsibility

### **Signs of Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse involves intentionally causing physical harm to a child, including hitting, shaking, burning, or poisoning. It may also include fabricating or inducing illness.

Possible indicators in a child:

- Unexplained bruises, burns, bites, fractures, or other injuries
- Injuries in unusual patterns or on areas less prone to accidental harm (e.g., thighs, back, torso)
- Fearfulness of parents or carers and reluctance to go home
- Wearing inappropriate clothing to hide injuries (e.g., long sleeves in hot weather)

Possible indicators in a caregiver:

- Provides unconvincing or inconsistent explanations for injuries
- History of using harsh physical discipline
- Describes the child negatively or with derogatory terms

[More about physical abuse](#)

### **Signs of Neglect**

Neglect involves failing to meet a child's basic needs, such as food, shelter, clothing, and medical care. It may also include a lack of emotional support.

Possible indicators in a child:

- Poor hygiene, dirty clothing, or an unkempt appearance

- Frequently hungry or stealing/begging for food
- Inconsistent or delayed medical care
- Persistent tiredness, lack of energy, or frequent absence from education

Possible indicators in a caregiver:

- Appears indifferent to the child's welfare
- Substance misuse or mental health issues affecting caregiving
- Isolates the child or shows limited engagement with their needs

[More about neglect](#)

### **Signs of Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to engage in sexual activities, whether or not the child understands what is happening. This may include physical contact or non-contact activities, such as grooming, exposing children to sexual materials, or exploiting them online.

Possible indicators in a child:

- Sudden fear of certain people or places
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge, language, or behaviors for their age
- Pain or discomfort in genital areas, difficulty walking, or frequent urinary infections
- Pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections in young children

Possible indicators in a caregiver:

- Overly protective or controlling behavior, limiting the child's interactions with others
- Displays jealousy or possessiveness over the child
- Acts secretive or overly isolated

[More about sexual abuse](#)

### **Signs of Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse involves persistent maltreatment that harms a child's emotional development. It may include belittling, silencing, overprotection, bullying, or exposing the child to domestic abuse.

Possible indicators in a child:

- Extreme behaviors (e.g., overly compliant, aggressive, withdrawn)
- Developmental delays or lack of confidence
- Self-harming behaviors or suicidal ideation
- Lack of attachment to parents or caregivers

Possible indicators in a caregiver:

- Constantly blames or criticizes the child
- Shows a lack of concern for the child's emotional well-being
- Rejects offers of support or assistance for the child

[More about emotional abuse](#)

### **Additional Safeguarding Issues**

Schools and organisations must also be vigilant about other specific safeguarding issues, including:

- Peer-on-peer abuse (bullying, sexual violence, or harassment)
- Online safety risks, including grooming and cyberbullying
- Children missing from education (an indicator of neglect, CSE, or trafficking)
- Domestic abuse, which impacts children exposed to it
- Radicalisation and extremism, as part of the Prevent Duty
- Mental health concerns, often arising from or linked to other forms of abuse

[Comprehensive guidance on specific issues \(GOV.UK\)](#)

This list is not exhaustive, and safeguarding concerns may present in various ways. Staff and volunteers must always report concerns to the DSL and act in the best interest of the child.