

Music4Wellbeing Safeguarding Policy

Updated October 2025

Compiled by Dr Patricia Vella-Burrows (Director/Designated Safeguarding Officer)
and approved by Mr David Dye (Board Member/Safeguarding Advisory Officer)

Policy Statement

Definition

Music4Wellbeing's (M4W) definition of safeguarding is equally: i) the protection of every person's right to live in safety and free from harm, abuse and neglect; ii) the right of everyone who is considered vulnerable to be treated equally, lawfully and ethically; and iii) the right of people who are unable to protect themselves to have additional measures in place to ensure their safety and welfare.

M4W's commitment to safeguarding

M4W delivers services for adults, the large majority of whom are aged 65+, and some of which are vulnerable. We take seriously our safeguarding responsibilities for all adults who come into contact with M4W. This includes:

- people who benefit from our charity's work
- staff
- volunteers
- other people who come into contact with M4W through our work.

Our safeguarding policy reflects our focus on human rights. We aim to protect and promote the rights of every person who comes into contact with M4W services regardless of cultural, educational and social background, age (18 years+), sex and gender, and physical and mental health status, including (dis)ability and mental capacity.

In the event of any M4W personnel working with a partner with a focus on children and young people, e.g., in schools or youth clubs for intergenerational projects, we will abide by the partner's safeguarding policies and procedures, e.g., access, vetting, DBS checks.

Informing Bodies

This policy is informed by Kent County Council's (KCC) Adult Protection Legislation and Guidance Service 1, and the safeguarding requirements laid out in the Department of Health's Care Act 2014, including its six safeguarding principles:

- **Empowerment:** Supporting and encouraging people to make their own decisions and informed consent - ensuring service recipients have autonomy in how they engage with our services, including their choice to give consent relating to GDPR, use of their images/comments in any arena
- **Prevention:** Taking action before harm occurs – looking out for signs of risk
- **Proportionality:** The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented – ensuring sensitive and appropriate action

¹ www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/information-for-professionals/adult-protection/adult-protection-forms-and-policies/national-adult-protection-legislation

- **Protection:** Supporting and representing those in greatest need – giving extra consideration to people unable to voice their needs
- **Partnership:** Local solutions through community services which can play a part in prevention, detection and reporting harm, abuse and neglect – working with KCC, our partner organisations and other older people's local service agencies
- **Accountability:** Accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice – as explained below.

The purpose of the policy

M4W's Safeguarding Policy aims to:

- provide protection for all recipients of M4W services, including harm arising from the conduct of M4W directors/trustees, staff and volunteers
- protect any other people who come into contact with the charity from harm, including our staff and volunteers
- ensure that all M4W directors/trustees, staff, volunteers and any other person coming into contact with M4W are clear about: the meaning of safeguarding; who is at risk and the different types of harm, abuse and neglect; and their duty of care, roles and responsibilities in safeguarding every person.

M4W's trustees:

- have appropriate policies and procedures in place, which are followed by all trustees, volunteers and beneficiaries
- check that people are suitable to act in their roles
- know how to spot and handle concerns in a full and open manner
- have a clear system of referring or reporting to relevant organisations as soon as concerns are suspected or identified
- set out risks and how they will be managed in a risk register which is regularly reviewed
- follow statutory guidance, good practice guidance and legislation relevant to our charity
- are quick to respond to concerns and carry out appropriate investigations
- do not ignore harm or downplay failures
- have a balanced trustee board and do not let one trustee dominate its work
- make sure protecting people from harm is central to M4W's culture
- have enough resources, including trained staff/volunteers/trustees for safeguarding and protecting people
- conduct periodic reviews of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice.

Recruitment and selection (directors/trustees, staff and volunteers)

M4W has stringent recruitment procedures to ensure best practice for safe personnel recruitment. Our screening policies aim to minimise the risk of employing/engaging unsuitable people to work/volunteer with M4W service recipients, including:

- using reputable and targeted advertising avenues, for example, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, Age UK, and community music organisations, including Sound Sense and Natural Voice Network

- an initial application process that includes the need to disclose conviction(s) for sexual assault or abuse
- an interview to assess suitability (e.g., evidence of kindness, tolerance, compassion, empathy)
- two references from e.g., current/past employer, a professional person who has known the applicant for over three years
- Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

Induction and refresher training

Induction training

All new directors/trustees, staff and volunteers must undertake mandatory induction training on safeguarding, delivered by the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and Safeguarding Advisory Officer (SAO) before they begin their M4W role. Below is an overview of what this training entails:

- Organisation overview
M4W's purpose, values, services and structure, and how safeguarding fits in with each of these.
- Legislation on safeguarding
An outline of the Care Act 2014 and up-to-date legislation from Kent County Council and NHS England ^{2 3}.
- Who is responsible for safeguarding
Clear guidance that everyone involved in organising and delivering M4W services is responsible for safeguarding our service recipients, and the specific responsibilities that apply to each role.

This policy aims to ensure that all M4W directors/trustees, staff, volunteers understand the following safeguarding elements:

- Who is at risk
Anyone can be at risk of harm, abuse or neglect but some people may be more vulnerable than others, for example:
 - A person with a physical disability, a learning difficulty, or a sensory impairment
 - Someone with mental health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder
 - A person with a long-term health condition
 - Someone who misuses substances or alcohol to the extent that it affects their ability to manage day-to-day living.
- Types of harm, abuse and neglect
 - Physical abuse

² <https://kmsab.org.uk/professionals/kmsab-policies>

³ www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/adult-pocket-guide.pdf

- Domestic violence or abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Psychological or emotional abuse
 - Financial or material abuse
 - Modern slavery
 - Discriminatory abuse
 - Organisational or institutional abuse
 - Neglect or acts of omission
 - Self-neglect.
- Signs of abuse
Looking out for suspected or actual harm, abuse and neglect, for example:
 - Disclosure/partial disclosure
 - Physical signs (bruising, other skin damage, unusual pain on moving)
 - Exacerbated distress and/or anxiety or changes in personality
 - Evidence of fear.
 - Responding to allegations
How to respond to allegations of harm, abuse and neglect; appropriate behaviour. Good practice guidance to disclosure of harm, abuse and neglect, includes:
 - speaking in a private and safe place
 - accepting what the complainant is saying without judgement
 - gently gathering information to establish the basic facts
 - asking the complainant what they would like to happen
 - never promising the complainant that you'll keep what they tell you confidential; explain who you will tell and why
 - explaining to the complainant how they will be involved and kept informed
 - providing information and advice on keeping safe and the safeguarding process
 - reporting the allegation appropriately (see p.7).

Refresher training

Mandatory safeguarding refresher sessions are delivered annually to directors, trustees, staff and volunteers who come into contact with recipients of M4W services. The sessions provide information on any changes in legislation or processes, and opportunities for revision and the reinforcement of M4W's policy through role play of different safeguarding scenarios.

Responsible personnel

All M4W directors/trustees, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to keep M4W service recipients safe and to protect them from harm, abuse and neglect. Lead responsibility is delegated to two, appropriately experienced personnel; Dr Patricia Vella-Burrows, Director of Operations and Dedicated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and Mr David Dye, Trustee and Safeguarding Advisory Officer (SAO). The DSO and SAO ensure a system of leadership and accountability that monitors all safeguarding issues:

Dr Patricia Vella-Burrows – Designated Safeguarding Officer:

- Undertakes certificated safeguarding refresher training every two years
- Co-reviews/compiles M4W's safeguarding policy accordingly (With DSO)
- Co-leads induction and refresher training for M4W's directors/trustees, staff and volunteers
- Is the first point of contact for M4W directors/trustees, staff and volunteers personnel with any safeguarding concerns
- Responds to and records allegations/reports of abuse according to M4W's safeguarding policy and directives from relevant Local Authorities or the police.

Mr David Dye – Safeguarding Advisory Officer:

- Oversees reviews and compilations of M4W's safeguarding policy
- Co-leads induction and refresher training for M4W's directors/trustees, staff and volunteers
- Monitors allegations/reports of abuse according to M4W's safeguarding policy and directives from relevant Local Authorities or the police
- Is the point of contact for M4W directors/trustees, staff and volunteers personnel with any safeguarding concerns should they do not wish to report via the DSO.

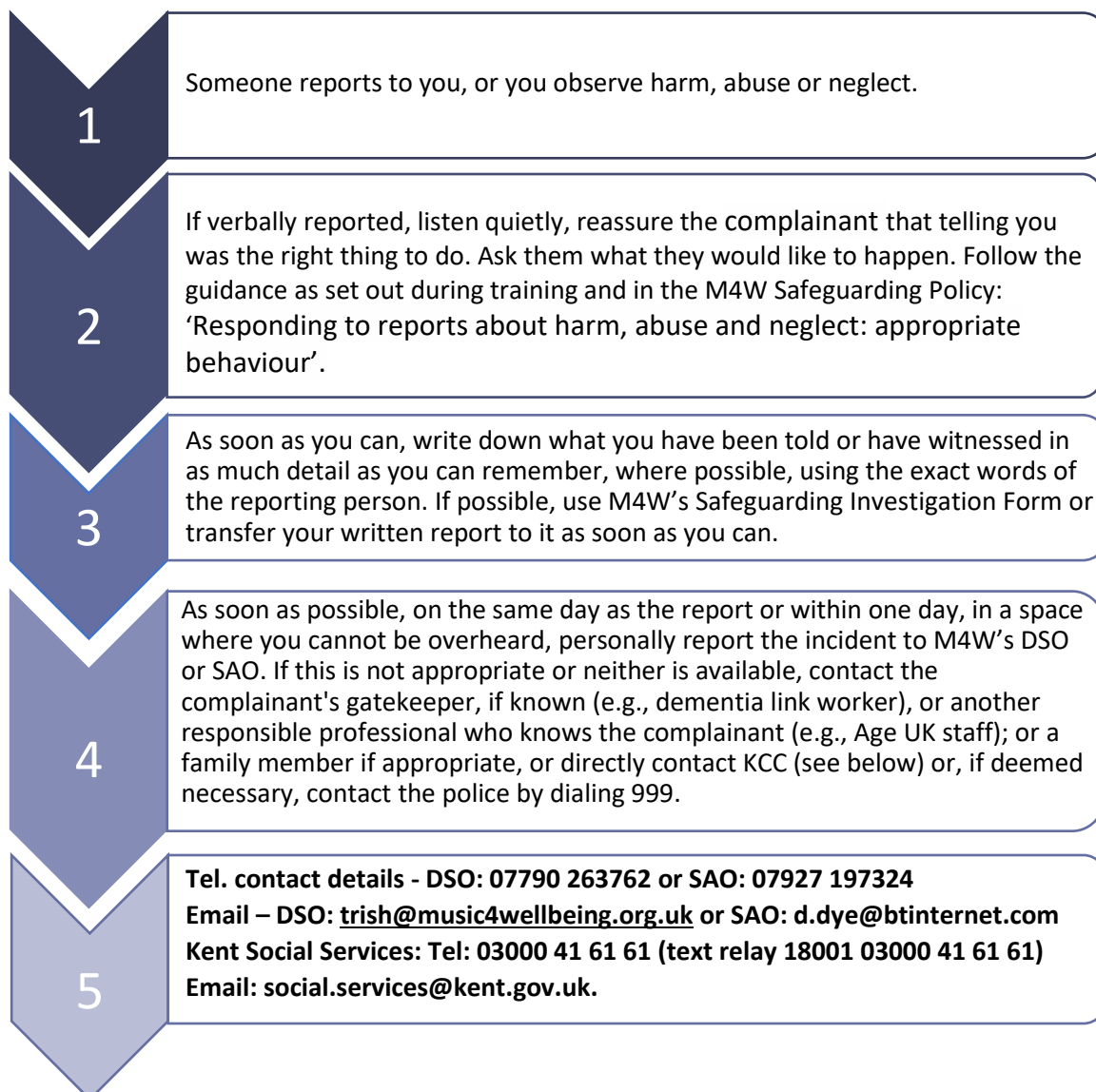
Both Dr Vella-Burrows and Mr Dye have professional experience of safeguarding adults in residential care and healthcare settings.

Managing an allegation against an M4W director/trustee, staff member or volunteer

If the complaint is about a specific M4W director, trustee, staff member or volunteer, that person will be informed within two working days (or as soon as possible) that a complaint has been made against him/her, and they will be told the nature of the complaint. There follows an initial investigation by Dr Vella-Burrows or Mr David Dye and subsequent action taken accordingly.

Reporting procedures

The flow chart below provides information on how to listen to a report of harm, abuse or neglect and reporting an incident. If concerns are over an observed incident that has not been directly reported to you, then the process should start at stage 3.



All M4W directors/trustees, staff and volunteers must be aware of their own professional responsibility and, should they believe that the actions taken by M4W's DSO or SAO are insufficient to mitigate the risk posed to service recipients, then they have their own responsibility to report the matter to Kent Social Services or police.

Sharing information

Unless there are clear reasons for not doing so, complaints should be shared with the carers, family and/or friends of the complainant to help them to get the care and support they need. Sharing information with these people should always be with the consent of the complainant. If the complainant lacks the mental capacity to make decisions about sharing information with key people, then the Mental Capacity Act should be followed to ensure each decision to share information is in the complainant's best interests. Decisions and reasoning should always be recorded.

There are only a limited number of circumstances where it would be acceptable not to share information pertinent to safeguarding with relevant safeguarding partners. These would be where the complainant involved has the mental capacity to make the decision and does not want their information shared and:

- nobody else is at risk
- no serious crime has been or may be committed
- the alleged abuser has no care and support needs
- no M4W director/trustee, staff member or volunteer is implicated
- no coercion or duress is suspected
- the public interest served by disclosure does not outweigh the public interest served by protecting confidentiality
- the risk is not high enough to warrant a multi-agency risk assessment conference referral
- no other legal authority has requested the information.

Assessing the effectiveness of policy practice and learning from experience

Following any incident, we hold a debrief meeting with relevant members of staff taking into account feedback from the authorities to whom the incident was reported.

Final points:

This live policy is updated annually or sooner where changes are deemed necessary (e.g., changes in safeguarding procedures at LA/national level, to accommodate partner-specific requirements, e.g., changes in Age UK/community partners' policies).


Patricia (Trish) Vella-Burrows – Designated Safeguarding Officer
Date: 06/10/2025


David Dye - Safeguarding Advisory Officer
Date: 06/10/2025

Date of Next Review: 05/10/2026
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