



THE MARLBOROUGH BRANDT GROUP CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

General

Confidentiality

All allegations/suspicions of abuse, whether or not the allegations are made against a member of MBG staff, direct agent or volunteer, are to be treated as strictly confidential.

Child Protection officers

All allegations/suspicions of abuse **must be referred immediately and directly to the MBG Director at the MBG Office** (during office hours call **01672 861 116**; outside normal office hours call **07833 904037**).

If the Director is unavailable, the Chair, currently Anna Quarendon, should be contacted on []

The Director or Chair should then refer the report as soon as possible thereafter to the **Trustee responsible for child protection** matters, currently [] on [] so that a course of action can be agreed.

Report, not investigate

No investigation or questioning is to be undertaken as to do so might jeopardise any future enquiry.

All allegations/suspicions are to be referred no matter how insignificant they seem to be or when they occur.

Office procedures

Recruitment

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children. Project workers will be CRB checked.

Two confidential references will be required and confirmed by telephone contact.

Photographs

Permission must be sought from schools/parents in the UK before photographs can be used in MBG newsletters and on its website. Photographs should not be labelled in such a way that enables a child to be identified from it.

Procedures for staff and volunteers

What happens if you suspect a young person is being abused?

1. Ensure that they are moved to a safe place away from immediate harm and that no situation arises which could cause any further concern. At least one other person should be present.
2. Ensure that the young person has access to an appropriate independent adult such as a police officer or a social worker as soon as possible.
3. State your intention to inform MBG.
4. Immediately tell the MBG Director or Chair, if unavailable, a member of the MBG Office.
5. Record the facts as you know them on the day of the incident including:
 - a. The nature of the allegations
 - b. A description of any injuries
 - c. The young person's account
 - d. Witnesses, times, dates or other relevant information
 - e. The young person's name, address and, where possible, information about a parent/guardian
6. Give a copy of the report to the MBG Director
7. Do not investigate further, share confidential information with others or take any further action unless authorised to do so.
8. Try to ensure no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.
9. Do not talk to the press. Do not say 'no comment', but direct any inquiries to the MBG Director.

What happens if a young person discloses to you abuse by someone else?

1. Allow the young person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.
2. Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.
3. Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass on the information.
4. Same steps as 1-6 above as in suspecting a young person is being abused.

What happens if you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself?

1. Immediately tell the MBG Director or Chair, or if unavailable, a member of the MBG Office staff.
2. Record the facts as you know them on the day of the incident and give a copy to the MBG Director.
3. In the case of the allegation being against the MBG Director or Chair, then the other should be contacted and take the lead.

Further advice and assistance

The NSPCC provides a free 24-hour Child Protection Helpline, staffed by experienced social work counsellors. It provides confidential counselling, information and advice for those in **England, Wales and Northern Ireland**. The telephone number is **0808 800 5000**. If using this service, please state at the outset that you are an adult seeking advice and information so that your call can be directed to an appropriate person.

In **Scotland**, the Child Protection Line helpline, established by the Scottish Executive, will provide information about what steps to take if you are concerned about a child. The helpline can be contacted 24 hours a day on **0800 022 3222**.

Procedures for MBG’s Child Protection Officers

On receipt of information in writing, in person or by phone, the MBG Director or Chair must contact the other and the Trustee responsible for child protections issues to agree the next steps. They may also contact other MBG Trustees.

Next steps are likely to involve contacting the local Police Child Protection Unit or the Social Services Department of the relevant local authority. To do so they should:

1. Ask for and note the name of the person with whom they are speaking (or have had contact from).
2. Discuss (no information is to be filtered or withheld).
3. Await advice.
4. State intent to advise relevant MBG staff, Trustees or Committees.
5. Ask if anyone else should be informed.
6. Contact relevant MBG staff, Trustees or Committees and inform them of the situation and the advice given.
7. Ensure that the individual concerned is suspended from any MBG duties involving contact with young people until the situation has been resolved. This is so the situation can be investigated and does not infer the allegations are substantiated. Please see the section below.
8. Prepare a confidential file recording all notes, conversations and advice from Police/ Social Services.
9. Follow advice from the Police/Social Services. Take no other action unless advised to do so by the Police/Social Services.

Policy for supporting staff and volunteers in the event of an allegation being made against them

Any allegation made against an individual may cause them to feel angry, upset, isolated and concerned. The individual is likely to require a great deal of support. Whilst the welfare and protection of the child is paramount, and the individual must be removed from activity involving young people during any investigation (including online access), this must not infer that the allegations against them are true. **Strict confidentiality must be maintained.**

The MBG Director, in consultation with the individual and the MBG Chair and Trustee responsible for child protection issues, should agree a plan to support the individual concerned. This could involve personal support as well as providing access to independent counselling and advice.

The individual may need further support when returning to their duties following the conclusion of any investigation. A plan to achieve this should be agreed before the person returns to their duties.

These procedures were last reviewed on.....

Signed:

(Trustee responsible for child protection issues)