

Manchester City of Literature

Manchester City of Literature – Safeguarding Policy

1. Preliminary

- 1.1 The Charity Commission has stated that safeguarding should be a key governance priority for all charities, regardless of size, type, or income, *not just those charities working with children or vulnerable adults*. It has also stated that it is essential for charity trustees to have and implement safeguarding policies and procedures - and that they must be adequate and appropriate for the charity's particular circumstances.
- 1.2 This Policy applies to all staff and volunteers of Manchester City of Literature. In this Policy, "volunteers" means and includes Manchester City of Literature's trustees and all other volunteers.

2. Commitment to safeguarding

- 2.1 Those who participate in the activities provided by Manchester City of Literature, or are beneficiaries of Manchester City of Literature, are referred to in this Policy as its "Beneficiaries".
- 2.2 Beneficiaries may be at risk due to a number of factors such as age, illness or disability, this is not an exhaustive list. Manchester City of Literature is committed to working in their interests, to promote their welfare, and to put in place safeguards and measures to protect them. In providing services or activities for Beneficiaries, Manchester City of Literature will endeavour at all times to minimise risk to them and to ensure that they are as safe as Manchester City of Literature team can make them.
- 2.3 Manchester City of Literature aims to protect all of its Beneficiaries from any act or behaviour of any member of staff or volunteer which, whether deliberately or unknowingly on the part of that member of staff or volunteer, gives rise to harm or ill treatment.
- 2.4 Such harm or ill treatment includes abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, discriminatory, institutional or organisational, financial or material), neglect, or impairment of the health or development of Manchester City of Literature's Beneficiaries.
- 2.5 Manchester City of Literature recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse. It adopts a "zero-tolerance" policy of abuse within Manchester City of Literature activities, or in any interaction with the organisation.
- 2.6 Manchester City of Literature maintains a Safe Working Practice Guidance. It includes:
 - (1) details about when and how risk assessments for:
 - a) volunteering roles; and
 - b) particular circumstances or activitiesshould be carried out.
 - (2) guidance on use of ICT related activities such as use of social media, email and internet.

Manchester City of Literature will ensure that the Guidance is implemented by all within the organisation and, for that purpose, it will ensure that its staff and volunteers have read and understood it.

- 2.7 Manchester City of Literature will work in partnership with local / national agencies to put in place appropriate procedures for reporting, making referrals, and accessing training and specialist support, as and when required.

3. Safe recruitment

- 3.1 To aim to protect its Beneficiaries, Manchester City of Literature will seek to recruit staff and volunteers using appropriate procedures, safeguards and checks.
- 3.2 Manchester City of Literature will take up at least two references for all staff posts and volunteer roles prior to appointment.
- 3.3 Manchester City of Literature will provide an induction programme for all new volunteers and staff, and appropriate training and ongoing/refresher training for them at regular intervals, to enable all volunteers and staff to undertake their roles safely, effectively and confidently. The induction will make it clear to them that they have an obligation to implement this Policy and to learn about protection issues and their related responsibilities.
- 3.4 Where Manchester City of Literature should do so, it will use the Disclosure & Barring Service (“DBS”) checks to help it to assess suitability of a candidate for a particular volunteer or staff role which is treated by the DBS as Regulated Activity and is therefore subject to a barring list check. In relation to a post or role which is eligible for an enhanced DBS check, where it considers it appropriate it will carry out an enhanced DBS check. Manchester City of Literature will assess any criminal record information that is disclosed in line with its data protection and equalities (treating ex-offenders fairly) policies.
- 3.5 Manchester City of Literature will regularly review its recruitment and other human resources procedures in response to changes in legislation and systems external to Manchester City of Literature, e.g. DBS and barring list checks.

4. Volunteers

- 4.1 All volunteer roles will be supported by a key contact within the organisation.
- 4.2 Volunteers will be treated equally alongside paid staff, and all volunteers will be offered the same opportunities for advancement, responsibility, training and gaining qualifications, and acknowledgement for their contribution to Manchester City of Literature, and its activities.
- 4.3 In turn, volunteers will be required to adhere to the applicable parts of this policy and any others pertinent to their role, at all times as a representative of Manchester City of Literature. Before they take up their role, they will each be given a clear description of the requirements and responsibilities of their role and the member of staff or trustee recruiting them will discuss their role with them, to ensure that they understand what is expected of them.

4.4 Any volunteer roles, which would be Regulated Activity if unsupervised, will be appropriately supervised in accordance with statutory guidance.

5. Safeguarding Officer

5.1 Manchester City of Literature's appointed Safeguarding Officer at the date of this policy is the Executive Director, who reports directly to the trustees. They will have access to appropriate training to support them in these roles.

5.2 They will be available to all staff, volunteers and Beneficiaries to speak to when they have any concerns, issues, or complaints regarding the safety, well-being or conduct of Beneficiaries, volunteers or staff.

5.3 The Safeguarding Officer will liaise with appropriate local and national agencies, contribute to appropriate policies, maintain records, keep confidentiality, adhere to and promote this Policy within Manchester City of Literature, and support or provide access to support for individuals suffering harm or abuse.

6. Awareness of harm and abuse within Manchester City of Literature

6.1 All incidents of harm to any Beneficiary will require an appropriate response to reduce risks and improve Manchester City of Literature's activities.

6.2 Harm is caused by accidents, deliberate abuse (physical, psychological, sexual, emotional, financial), neglect (deliberate or not) or factors such as bullying, prejudicial attitudes, or a failure to enable a person to participate in activities that are open to most of their peers. It can also include abuse via use of ICT facilities (e.g. grooming, bullying via the internet).

6.3 Deliberate acts of harm (physical, psychological, sexual, emotional and financial) and neglect are abuses against the person. Those acts will incur disciplinary proceedings and may require reports and referrals to social services, the police, other professional bodies, and the DBS if the act is by someone in Regulated Activity. If a criminal offence is thought to have been committed by any staff member or volunteer, the police will be informed.

7. Confidentiality

All reports and logs (including personnel records) will be kept securely and confidentially according to Manchester City of Literature's Data Protection Policy and Confidentiality Policy or in line with the DBS Code of Practice for Registered Bodies if appropriate, until or unless it is necessary to share this material with the agencies named above. Information will be shared by Manchester City of Literature on a "need-to-know" basis only.

8. Reports of possible or actual harm

8.1 Manchester City of Literature supports and encourages all Beneficiaries, volunteers and staff to promptly speak up and contact the Safeguarding Officer where there is a concern (i.e. a worry, issue or doubt about practice or about treatment of a Beneficiary or colleague, or their circumstances), or a disclosure (i.e. information about a person at risk of or suffering from Significant Harm) or an allegation of an

incident or a possibility that a volunteer or staff member has caused harm or could cause harm to a person in their care.

- 8.2 Staff or volunteers can report, and have a responsibility to report, something that they become aware of if they suspect or discover that it is not right or is illegal or if it appears to them that someone at work is neglecting their duties, putting someone's health and safety in danger or covering up wrongdoing. They may become aware of any of these things from what they see or hear or from something another person has disclosed to them.
- 8.3 In the first instance the staff or volunteer making a report should speak to their line manager, or designated contact at the organisation, who will then liaise with the Safeguarding Officer or Manchester City of Literature's trustee with appropriate responsibility, who is the Chair of the Board of trustees. However, if the report implicates their line manager, the staff member or volunteer making the report should instead speak directly to the Safeguarding Officer or the designated trustee.
- 8.4 Manchester City of Literature prefers that anyone should use internal processes whenever possible to make a report as above, but this does not prevent them from making a report or referral, in their own right as a private individual, to statutory agencies such as social services or the police.
- 8.5 Manchester City of Literature cannot promise confidentiality to staff or volunteers making an internal report (to the Safeguarding Officer or Manchester City of Literature's trustee with appropriate responsibility or their line manager) where it has to be shared with any statutory agencies.
- 8.6 Manchester City of Literature also supports its staff or volunteers to raise concerns or to disclose information, which they believe shows malpractice - whistle-blowing (disclosure in the public interest).

9. Safeguarding Officer's action

Where there is risk of Significant Harm to any Beneficiary, volunteers or staff, the Safeguarding Officer has the power to act as necessary and, in particular, as follows:

- log all conversations regarding the issue
- sign and request signatures on reports and statements
- confidentially seek advice from expert sources
- share concerns (with consent where required and appropriate) internally with senior staff / Chair of the Board of trustees
- share concerns and make referrals to external agencies such as social services or the police, as appropriate to the circumstances
- make a referral to the DBS regarding staff or volunteers in Regulated Activity whose conduct is harmful to Beneficiaries and refer them to DBS when they are removed from Regulated Activity.

10. Communication by Manchester City of Literature about safeguarding and this Policy

- 10.1 All staff and volunteers have an obligation to learn about protection issues and their related responsibilities.
- 10.2 Manchester City of Literature will communicate this Policy (using appropriate methods, formats and language to communicate the substance of it) to all of its staff, volunteers, and Beneficiaries and their families / carers, and it will also make it available to the public. The Executive Director will be responsible to the Board of trustees for communicating this Policy to them.
- 10.3 To encourage everyone involved in Manchester City of Literature to understand that safeguarding is the business of everyone, and to assist all staff and volunteers to learn about protection issues and their related responsibilities, Manchester City of Literature will ensure that all staff and volunteers receive appropriate updates about safeguarding in general, and its approach to it in particular. This allows for discussion about issues and concerns, which will in turn influence any future changes to policy. The aim is to continue to learn and improve Manchester City of Literature's safeguarding responsibilities.

11. Implementation of this Policy

- 11.1 This Policy must be followed by all staff and volunteers of Manchester City of Literature and must be promoted by all of its trustees and senior staff. Failure to follow it will be treated as a very serious matter, and for staff and volunteers could be deemed to be gross misconduct.

12. Adoption, coming into effect, and review, of this Policy

- 12.1 This Safeguarding Policy was approved by the Board of trustees of Manchester City of Literature on 30 September 2020. It also comes into force on that date.
- 12.2 The Board will, as appropriate, monitor and enforce this Policy,
- 12.3 The Board will revise this Policy on an annual basis, or more frequently when legislation, or best practice dictates.