

## Child Protection Policy



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# MBM TDC's Child Protection Policy

## Introduction

MBM Training & Development Center makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe. In this, we are guided by international agreements, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, legal protection afforded children and young people by the state, and by the professional demands of best practice.

MBM TDC's Child Protection Policy seeks to provide clear understanding of how to safeguard children and to recognise, report and record concerns about a child's welfare.

We strive to ensure that all children and young people have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity.

Our policy commits to anti-discriminatory practice and recognises the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.

MBM TDC comes into contact with children and vulnerable adults through the following regulated\* activities:

- non-formal education and training activities;
- coaching and mentoring;
- community outreach.

MBM TDC believes that our employees, and all those over whom we have any authority and influence, must demonstrate behaviour that is not simply consistent with protocols and legislation, but also with an appropriate set of personal and professional standards.

Child protection is both a corporate and an individual responsibility. At MBM Training & Development Center we are committed to best practice in recruitment, to ensuring staff understanding of and commitment to child protection principles, and to advising our partners of our policies in this regard.

MBM TDC's Child Protection Policy outlines the safeguarding strategies that our staff and collaborators need to follow in order to ensure they act appropriately and confidently to protect the children we work with. We have developed our policies and procedures to protect both children and staff.

MBM TDC's Child Protection Policy seeks to identify and create a safer organisational culture in order to protect children and young people.

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*\*Regulated activity can be defined as 'frequent contact' with a vulnerable person (once a month or more) or as 'intensive contact' (3 days or more within a 30 day period)*

## **2. Staff recruitment**

At MBM TDC we believe in risk management and, where possible, elimination, which means identifying the potential for an incident to occur and taking steps to reduce the possibility of that incident occurring. This strengthens and adds value to the activities we offer.

### **2.1 Those bound by MBM TDC's Child Protection Policy**

- 1 All staff of MBM TDC, and all volunteers and interns.
- 2 All those acting for MBM TDC, such as consultants and trainers, will be apprised of MBM TDC's child protection policy, and will be bound by its demands on corporate and personal behaviour and responsibility.
- 3 Those who visit MBM TDC's partners' projects in the name of MBM TDC, such as volunteers, patrons, donors, corporate sponsors, journalists, supporters and trustees.

### **2.2 Recruitment**

At MBM TDC we believe there is a greater likelihood of attracting the most suitable person for the job when it is clear what the job involves, so all posts in our organisation have job descriptions, and key selection criteria describe the ideal skills, experience, knowledge and understanding required from a person, in order to carry out their role.

Insufficient screening is a risk factor, which could allow child abuse to occur by the placement of a child sex offender or otherwise unsuitable candidate. Hence, MBM TD Center screens all staff and volunteers; as well as trainers and consultants who will have contact with children as part of our recruitment and selection process.

MBM TDC collects data from potential employees and interns, and prospective volunteers for internal use only. The personal data supplied to MBM TDC will only be used by us and our partner projects and will not be passed on or sold to any outside organisation. We take privacy very seriously and do everything possible to protect it.

### **2.3 Employees, interns, volunteers and consultants**

The following detailed procedure is followed:

- 1 A candidate specification accompanies each job description, and applicants are judged against these criteria.
- 2 When advertising vacancies, we inform candidates of our Child Protection Policy, our Code of Conduct and of our screening process.
- 3 At least one member of the recruitment panel will be fully aware of MBM TDC's child protection policy requirements and procedures.

4. All applicants must declare all criminal convictions, spent and unspent. A false declaration that results in employment will render the person liable to dismissal without notice. Candidates must explain gaps in their employment history.
- 5 Preferred candidates must supply a DBS/police check obtained within the previous 3 years (*see Appendix 5 for Disclosure and Barring Service/police check information*). The candidate must organise this, with MBM TDC`s support.
- 6 If a prospective employee is unable to obtain a DBS/police check, they must complete the background check process (*see Appendix 6 for Background check information*). Referees will be informed in the reference request that volunteers will have access to children. They will be asked to draw to MBM TDC's attention any child protection concerns they may have.  
An offer of employment will not be made until a background check has been carried out. Preferred candidates will also be subject to an online screening process.
- 7 Only the MBM TDC`s Directors and Child Protection Officer will know the findings of the disclosure check and screening process, and only relevant convictions will be taken into account.
8. On appointment, MBM TDC staff, interns, volunteers and consultants will be given a copy of the MBM TDC`s Child Protection Policy Documents and will be asked to sign a declaration that they understand this policy and agree to be bound by it. This is a contractual obligation within the staff contract.
9. Consultants working for MBM TDC will be required to abide by our Child Protection Policy. Those with an enhanced DBS/police check less than three years old will be asked to produce it. Without it, consultants must organise an enhanced DBS/police check.
10. Consultants living overseas in countries where DBS/police checks (or similar) are not feasible must provide MBM TDC with details of two organisations that will provide professional and character references. Satisfactory references must be obtained before consultancy can commence. MBM TDC`s contracts with consultants will include a signed commitment to abide by MBM TDC`s Child Protection Policy.

### **3. Management and training**

MBM Training & Development Center believes that every employee should be aware of the principles and procedures of child protection, and of how to recognise and respond to child abuse. To this end, MBM TDC will:

- a. Designate a Child Protection Officer to be responsible for child protection implementation. This person is responsible for training, supervision, monitoring and support of child protection within the organisation. New staff will be made aware of the role and responsibilities of the Child Protection Officer and will be encouraged to approach them with questions on child protection issues.
- b. Induct new staff in child protection principles and procedures within three months of appointment.
- c. Induct and train interns, trustees, consultants and other representatives in child protection principles and procedures in a timely fashion.

### **4. Volunteers, interns and staff, participating in partner projects overseas**

MBM Training&Development Center works overseas, usually through partners.

MBM TDC will require its representatives to partner projects to sign up to the Child Protection Policy (*see Appendix 7: Statement of Commitment*).

Failure to do so will be made known to our partner overseas.

### **5. Child protection in project partnerships**

MBM TDC has a responsibility to children through the work of its partners, locally and overseas. On occasion children may disclose to our partners overseas, or to visiting MBM TDC personnel, that they are being abused. Also, staff may bring to the attention of MBM TDC, allegations or suspicions of abuse by fellow staff members.

Procedures for working with children to construct safe organisations are essential. All children, on an equal basis, should be involved in defining the risk and minimising it. Children need to be aware of child abuse and misconduct and how they may be targeted and manipulated.

Reporting procedures need to be accessible and appropriate, and the entire procedure from complaint or information to follow-up and possible legal action should be made apparent.

MBM Training&Development Center expects from its partners that children will be involved in maintaining and influencing an environment of maximum safety.

Therefore, in relation to the work of its partners, MBM TDC will:

- 1 Advise partners on MBM TDC's Child Protection Policy.
- 2 Encourage a reporting system that confers respect on complainants and respects confidentiality.

## 6. Reporting processes

- 1 Should a person travelling as a representative of MBM TDC refuse to accept, or to agree to be bound by MBM TDC's child protection policies, the visit will be called off, and the partner informed.
- 2 Should a partner identify a case of abuse, or suspect the behaviour or intent of a MBM TDC employee, or someone acting on behalf of the organisation, this should be reported as a matter of urgency to MBM TDC's Child Protection Officer or any senior member of staff. The person responsible for human resources or the chairperson of the organisation will deal with this. *(See Appendix 2 for guidelines on recognising signs of abuse, Appendix 3 for the reporting format, and Appendix 6 for details of how to report suspected abuse)*
- 3 In the event of an allegation of child abuse, MBM TDC will request that, when still in country, the matter is reported immediately to the Director of the project and the local authorities.
- 4 When the allegation is made after the person's departure from the country in which the alleged offence took place, a formal enquiry will be initiated that could lead to further measures being taken.

## **Appendix 1: MBM TDC`S Behaviour Code of Conduct**

MBM TDC`s Behaviour Code of Conduct enables staff, volunteers, interns and consultants to comply with our Child Protection Policy. By setting standards for appropriate behaviour it also protects people who come into contact with children from unfounded accusations of improper conduct.

The Code clarifies those unacceptable forms of behaviour which will result in a formal enquiry and which could lead to disciplinary measures being taken or criminal proceedings being instituted. Additionally, the Code of Conduct gives guidance on the expected standards of behaviour of adults towards children, and also of children towards other children.

This Code of Conduct applies to all MBM TDC staff, volunteers and anyone acting as a representative of, or on behalf of, MBM TDC who may come into direct contact with, or be responsible for, bringing children into contact with adults.

The Code of Conduct shall be prominently displayed for, or easily accessible to, all organisation representatives.

**The Code of Conduct should be interpreted in a spirit of transparency and commonsense, with the best interests of the child as the primary consideration.**

### **Minimising Risk Situations**

#### **NEVER**

1 Condone or participate in behaviour that is illegal or unsafe or sets a bad example.

#### **TRY NOT TO:**

- 1 Be alone with a single child, including in the following situations: in a car, overnight, in your home, or in the home of a child.
- 2 Show favouritism or spend excessive amounts of time with one child.

#### **TRY TO:**

- 3 Avoid placing yourself in a compromising or vulnerable position.
- 4 Be accompanied by a second adult whenever possible.
- 5 Meet with a child in a central, public location whenever possible.
- 6 Avoid doing something that could be misinterpreted by a third party.



## **Sexual Behaviour**

### **NEVER:**

- 1 Develop physical/sexual relationships with a child or any young adult in your charge.
- 2 Behave physically in a manner that is inappropriate or sexually provocative.
- 3 Engage in or allow sexually provocative games with children to take place.
- 4 Do things of a personal nature that a child could do for him/herself, including dressing, bathing, and grooming.

## **Physical Behaviour**

### **NEVER:**

- 1 Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse a child.

### **DO:**

- 2 Wait for appropriate physical contact, such as holding hands, to be initiated by the child.
- 3 Ask permission from children before taking photographs of them, except under exceptional circumstances, based on the child or children's best interest, where this might not be possible or desirable.

## **Psychosocial Behaviour**

### **DO:**

- 1 Be aware of the power balance between an adult and child, and avoid taking any advantage this may provide.

### **DO NOT:**

- 1 Use language that will mentally or emotionally harm a child.
- 2 Suggest inappropriate behaviour or relations of any kind.
- 3 Act in any way that intends to embarrass, shame, humiliate or degrade a child.
- 4 Encourage any inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour, such as tantrums by a child.
- 5 Show discrimination of race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, or political persuasion.

## **Peer Abuse**

### **DO:**

- 1 Be aware of the potential for peer abuse.
- 2 Encourage MBM TDC partners to develop special measures and supervision to protect younger and especially vulnerable children.

3 Avoid placing children in high-risk peer situations (e.g. unsupervised mixing of older and younger children).

**DO NOT:**

1 Allow children to engage in sexually provocative games with each other.

**Physical Environment**

**DO:**

2 Encourage partners to develop clear rules to address specific physical safety issues relative to the local physical environment of a project (e.g. for projects based near water, heavy road traffic, railway lines).

**What to do if you suspect or witness  
an abuse/ potentially abusive behaviour**

Immediately bring to the attention of MBM TDC any instance of witnessed or suspected abuse, and any action or behaviour that could be construed as poor practice or potentially abusive.

## Appendix 2: Recognising signs of abuse

It can be difficult to recognise signs of abuse and this is no simple checklist to help with this. You may become aware of potential warning signs but these should be observed and assessed carefully. Don't automatically assume that abuse is occurring. When you actually talk to the child concerned, you may find the situation is, in fact, quite innocent. However, do not dismiss significant changes in behaviour, or any fears, worries or physical signs a child may be exhibiting. It is not your role to be an investigator – instead, report any concerns you may have to MBM TDC's designated child protection contact.

The chart below may help to recognise when abuse is occurring.

<p><b>Possible signs of physical abuse:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Improbable excuses given to explain injuries</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Refusal to discuss injuries</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal from physical contact</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Showing wariness or distrust of adults</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Self-destructive tendencies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Being aggressive towards others</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Being very passive and compliant</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Chronic running away</li> </ul>	<p><b>Possible signs of neglect:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Frequent hunger</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Poor personal hygiene</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Constant tiredness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate clothing, e.g. summer clothes in winter</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Untreated medical problems</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Low self-esteem</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Poor social relationships</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Compulsive stealing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drug or alcohol abuse</li> </ul> <p><b>Please be aware that signs of neglect can be the norm when working with children in developing countries.</b></p>
<p><b>Possible signs of emotional abuse:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Physical, mental and emotional development is delayed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Highly anxious</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Showing delayed speech or sudden speech disorder</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fear of new situations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Low self-esteem</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Extremes of passivity or aggression</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drug or alcohol abuse</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Chronic running away</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Compulsive stealing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Possible signs of sexual abuse:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Age inappropriate sexualised behaviour</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Physical indicators (general and in genital and anal areas)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Behavioural indicators (general and sexual) which must be interpreted with regard to the individual child's level of functioning and development stage</li> </ul>

## **Possible signs of concern regarding adult behaviour:**

- A person in whose presence a child becomes unusually distressed or agitated can be a cause for concern.
- A member of staff, volunteer or parent who asks a child to lie about anything – especially if it is about meeting that child – is a cause for concern.
- Any member of staff, volunteer or parent who asks you to lie about a situation involving a child – particularly if that child looks distressed – is a cause for concern.
- Any person who persistently fails to follow our organisation's Code of Conduct and behavioural protocols (detailed in the Child Protection Policy) is a cause for concern, particularly if their reasons are evasive.
- Private (i.e. outside of work) meetings between a child and a member of staff or volunteer are a cause for concern.

## Appendix 3: Sample report form for suspected abuse

If you become aware that a child's safety might be in danger, please complete this form to the best of your knowledge. Please note that child protection concerns must be reported directly to the designated contact person immediately (preferably within the same working day). You may wish to complete this form **before** contacting the designated person in your organisation's reporting process **or** you may wish to complete the report **after** contacting the designated person. This report is to be used as a tool to develop the most un-biased information-based report possible. For confidentiality reasons, the report should be written and signed solely by you. It should **only** be sent to the designated contact person. It will be held in a safe and secure place and treated in the strictest confidence.

### 1. About You

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Workplace: \_\_\_\_\_

Your relationship to the child: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. About the Child

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's age: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's address: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's guardians: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. About your Concern

Was the abuse observed or suspected? \_\_\_\_\_

Is this concern based on first hand information or information divulged to you by someone else?

(If so, who) \_\_\_\_\_

Did the child disclose abuse to you? \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the alleged incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of the alleged incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of the alleged incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of alleged perpetrator: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of the allegation: \_\_\_\_\_

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Your personal observations (*visible injuries, child's emotional state, etc.*)

[N.B. Make a clear distinction between what is fact and what is opinion or hearsay]

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**Exactly** what the child or other source said to you [if relevant] and how you responded to him or her: [Do not lead the child. Record actual details]

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Any other information not previously covered:

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**MBM TDC Statement of Consent  
for use of information and photos relating  
to individual children and young people**

I \_\_\_\_\_

agree to the use of my story and/or information about my life, and photographs by MBM Training&Development Center in its publications, reports and website for the purposes of raising awareness about the situation of children around the world.

MBM TDC will not pass on this information to a third party who wishes to use the information or photos, without seeking further approval from you.

Signed (child/youth) \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signed (on behalf of MBM TDC) \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## **Appendix 4: Disclosure and Barring Service/ police check information**

As MBM Training & Development Center takes child protection very seriously, we require all volunteers, consultants, trainers and child mentors to obtain a DBS/police check from their country of nationality or the country where they are resident.

When unable to obtain a DBS/police check, they will be required to complete a background check, providing referees to attest to their character (*see Appendix 5, Background check information*).

When they receive their certified document, they need to scan or photograph it and send it to MBM TDC approved **before** a volunteer placement can be accepted by MBM TDC.

If prospective volunteers already have a DBS/police check that was completed within the past 3 years, this is acceptable to MBM TDC.

## **Appendix 5: Background check information**

If volunteers, trainers and experts are unable to obtain a DBS/police check, they will be required to complete a background check, providing referees to attest to their character.

Three referees will be required:

- 1) the volunteer/trainer/expert's current or most recent employer, or, for those who have never worked, a teacher, lecturer or professor;
- 2) a professional who knows the applicant well, e.g. a lawyer, accountant, doctor, member of the clergy, etc., and
- 3) a close family member (e.g. parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle or cousin).

## **Appendix 6: Reporting suspected abuse**

MBM TDC's operations are with partner organisations both in the UK and overseas.

Any suspected abuse should be reported to both MBM TDC's representative at the location and the Director of the project where possible.

Where possible an email should also be sent to MBM TDC's Child Protection Officer at [mbmcpo@gmail.com](mailto:mbmcpo@gmail.com) to advise of a report being made.

An investigation of the report will be made at the earliest possible point by the MBM TDC representative and the Director at the partner project.

To protect the privacy of the child, the report will not be made public (even to the individual reporting the abuse).

The report can be compiled using MBM TDC's Child Protection Policy Appendix 3 *Sample report form for suspected abuse* or can be given verbally to MBM TDC's representative or the Director of the project.

If the individual feels they are unable to report the abuse to the designated persons present at the project then the following options should be applied:

1. Email MBM TDC's Child Protection Officer at [mbmcpo@gmail.com](mailto:mbmcpo@gmail.com) for advice.
2. Seek advice from fellow individuals at the location.
3. Report the abuse to the relevant authorities – this can be very problematic due to language barriers and the authorities' possible inability to investigate the abuse.

Persons suspected of abuse will immediately be suspended from the project for the safety of the children. Only after a positive investigation will the individual be allowed to return to the project.

If the investigation by the Director / MBM TDC representative raises concerns of abuse, the appropriate authorities will be informed. The Director / MBM TDC representative will then fully cooperate with the authorities in their investigation and legal action against the abuser.

**Appendix 7:  
Statement of Commitment**

**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT  
to MBM TDC's Child Protection Policy**

"I, \_\_\_\_\_

[name],

have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in this Child Protection Policy.

I agree with the principles contained herein and accept the importance of implementing child protection policies and practice while working with MBM Training & Development Center.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Job title / role)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)