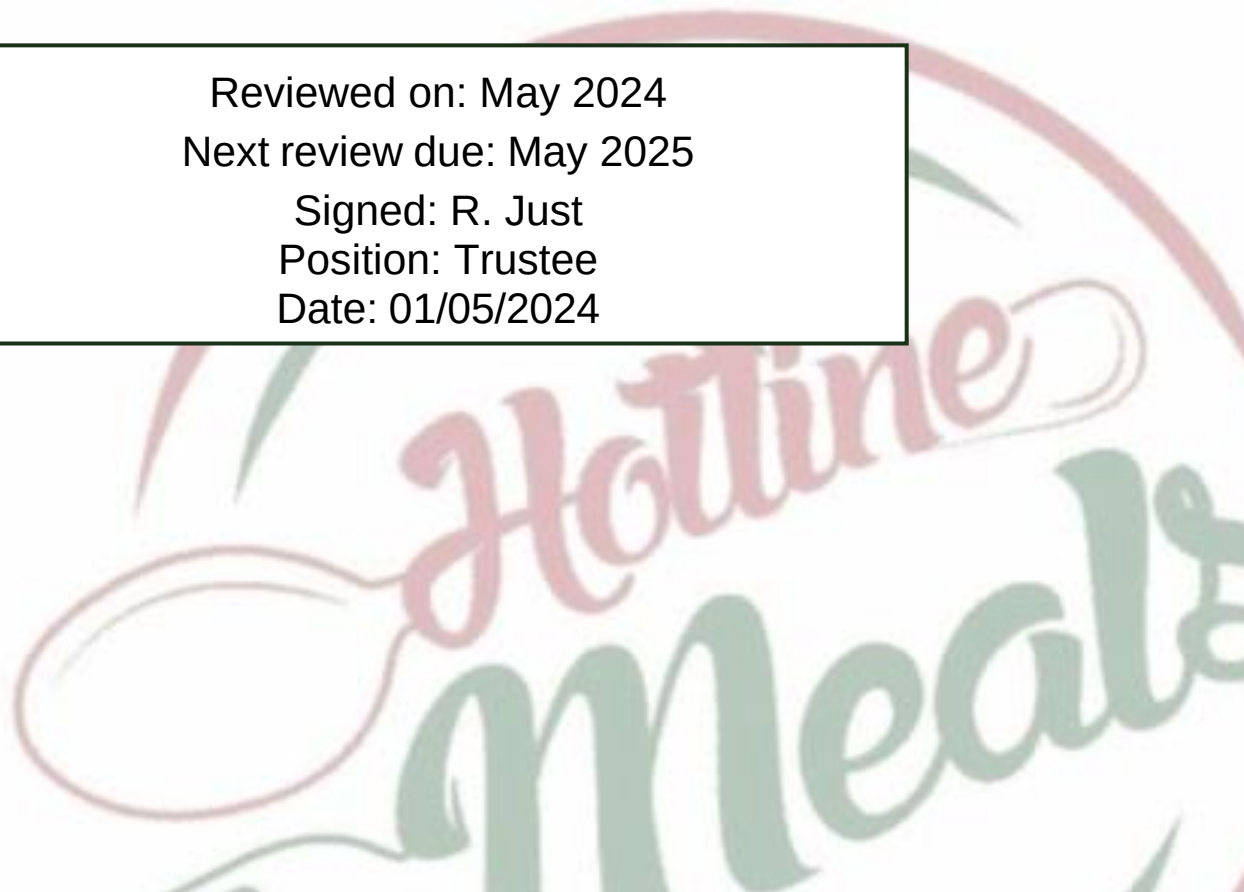


HOT LINE MEALS SERVICE (LONDON)

Safeguarding Policy

Reviewed on: May 2024
Next review due: May 2025
Signed: R. Just
Position: Trustee
Date: 01/05/2024



Hot Line Meals Service (London)

Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy

OBJECTIVE OF THIS POLICY

The objective of this policy is to ensure that across all the aspects of Hot Line Meals Service (London) various programs, the personal safety of all children and young people accessing the organisation and its services are safeguarded. This is done through actively promoting awareness and good practice and ensuring that sound procedures are in place.

Of our 1500 members, 100% are children and young people. Hot Line Meals Service works in partnership with Social Services and the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB). Hot Line Meals Service goal is to ensure that all activities are carried out in a safe way that enhances the lives of children and young people.

Harm can happen to children in a variety of ways;

- Through an accident;
- Through bullying by other users;
- Through misguided actions by staff and volunteers;
- Very rarely, through the deliberate actions of staff, volunteers or service users who are using the group to make contact with children in order to abuse them.

IMPLEMENTATION

Mrs Yutta Domb, who is a trained Safeguarding Officer, is responsible (the Responsible Officer/RO) for all aspects of safeguarding awareness and implementation of this policy.

The Senior Staff Member (SSM) of Hot Line Meals Service, Mrs Chani Rapaport, shall ensure active compliance with this policy by everyone working in the organisation, and shall work closely with the RO to ensure this, affording the RO every assistance to this end. All other officers, staff and volunteers will actively endeavor to implement this policy.

The RO will be responsible to the Board of Trustees for;

- ensuring that this policy is implemented throughout Hot Line Meals Service activities;
- ensuring all necessary child protection-related enquiries, procedures and investigations are carried out;
- reporting results of screening enquiries and for preserving a "need to know" levels of confidentiality and access to secure records;
- ensuring secure and confidential records relating to safeguarding matters;
- liaison with the senior staff member and session leaders to ensure implementation of the policy by all staff and volunteers;
- liaison with social services at a formal and informal level on safeguarding matters, likewise with the police;

- the reporting to meetings of the Board of Directors/Trustees on the implementation of this policy;
- the reporting of allegations and suspicion of abuse to the appropriate authorities;
- ensuring there is adequate induction and training relating to safeguarding matters;
- ensuring that all Hot Line Meals Service
- services are sound in terms of safeguarding as regards personnel, practices, premises;
- Checking all incident reports made by staff and volunteers, countersigning them, and making such reference to authority as is appropriate, after consultation with the senior staff member etc. as detailed below.

SAFER RECRUITMENT – DBS CHECKING FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Staff recruitment and appointments are carried out in line with the City & Hackney SCB Minimum Standards and Expectations on Safer Recruitment.

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will also be carried out for staff, volunteers and trustees.

Introduction:

Forty Limited is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all of the following categories:

- Our staff
- Our volunteers
- Our service users
- Our service users/staff/volunteers with a learning disability
- The general public that we come in contact with

POLICY STATEMENT:

- When recruiting staff and volunteers to service our projects, we carry out the following checks:
- Application form is completed on expression of interest, listing full name, address, contact details, DOB and history of education, employment and voluntary work.
- Two referees are requested who have known the applicant for over two years, one of which must be the most recent employer (or in the case of a volunteer, someone who has known them in a professional capacity)
- Face to face interview with the CEO, the Team Manager, a Project Manager or the Volunteer Co-ordinator.
- Disclosure & Barring check carried out before commencement of unsupervised activity.
- During interview all candidates will be questioned regarding their understanding of safeguarding and how that might be a consideration in the role they are applying for.
- Ongoing supervision of staff and volunteers is given on a regular basis by Project Volunteers, Volunteer Co-ordinator and team and project manager and any concerns are reported to the Trustee Board.
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- With regard to the DBS status of those staff that have already had checks carried out in other organisations; Hotline Meals Service will only accept new staff with up to date DBS checks if they are less than three years old and verification is received from the organisation who countersigned them.
- With regard to the re-checking of existing staff and volunteers:

- Existing staff will need DBS checks renewed every three years; unless that they have been in regular employment with Hotline Meals Service or any other organisation and their circumstances have not changed (e.g. they have not had a very long, unexplained absence).
- (Ofsted published the following statement in a bulletin, 14th October 2005:)
At present there is no requirement to carry out a check in respect of an employee who has been with the same provider since obtaining an Enhanced Disclosure, or since appropriate checks were made on initial employment if this pre-dated the CRB.
- If the policy changes; everyone affected by the change will be informed.
- Hotline Meals Service will accept staff who work for us on a sessional basis (e.g. summer scheme staff) with DBS checks (that have been carried out by Hotline Meals Service) up to 3 years old if they
- are prepared to sign a statement that their circumstances have not changed.
- If a student is working in our setting for a period of three or more months, the DfE recommend that we carry out a criminal record check. Any student working for shorter periods of time should have a criminal record check done through their training organisation.
- Hotline Meals Service exercises its right to use its discretion to repeat the DBS check if it is deemed necessary. Circumstances that may require a DBS check to be carried out could be:
- Allegations made against an individual by a service user or someone they have come in contact with.
- Concerns are expressed by a Project Volunteer that may suggest further checks are necessary
- Activity in relation to a service user that contravenes guidelines on adult protection or child protection.
- The DBS re-check would be carried out in conjunction with any other sanctions that would be deemed necessary (e.g. suspension from duty), and in full consultation with the staff member of volunteer.
- Due to current changes in the DBS regulations, it is no longer a requirement to carry out DBS checks on:
- Trustees
- Volunteers under 16 years of age
- Therefore, it is essential that full reference checking, interviewing and further vetting (if required) is carried out to ensure that our members are safeguarded. Where concerns are raised with regards to the appointments of such individuals the final decision rests with the CEO and the Chairperson

On-line DBS

- There is now a facility for DBS' updates to be carried out on-line and staff members or volunteers can sign up for this as soon as they have their application form reference number. This facility is open until 19 days after the certificate has been issued.
- The benefit of this on-line registration to the individual is that this ensures the DBS is totally portable and can be used in other employment. There is a cost of £13.00 per year for this service and we would expect the employee to bear the cost of this themselves. There is no cost to the volunteer.
- Where a Hotline Meals Service employee has signed up for this service, they will be issued with a letter of permission. This letter of permission allows Hotline Meals Service the right to access their DBS details, however, whenever this is actioned, Hotline Meals Service will notify the individual that this is being done, and this will be logged.

Safer Working

- All staff and volunteers working for Hotline Meals Service have a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults that they are working with to ensure their physical, sexual and emotional safety. In order to achieve this all staff and volunteers should follow some simple guidelines.

REPORTING OF CONCERNS

All staff working at Hot Line Meals Service has a duty to ensure that any suspicion, incident, allegation or other manifestation relating to safeguarding is reported as provided below.

Disclosure or evidence for concern may occur in any number of ways.

This may be by what a child or young person says, about itself or another child or children. It may be through interception of a written item, or through observation of activity or behaviour giving cause for concern. It may be through changes in behaviour or attitude. There may be physical, emotional pointers such as bruising, staining, inappropriate behaviour or knowledge. These and many other signs can be picked up by staff. Examples include:

Emotional: Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child or young person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. E.g. Inappropriate emotional response to painful situations, neurotic behaviour, desperate attention seeking behaviour.

Sexual: This involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This activity may involve physical contact or even non-physical contact activities. This can be noted by bruises, scratches, burns or bite marks on the body, inappropriate awareness of such issues shown for example in drawings, vocabulary or games, refuses to stay with certain people or go to certain places, withdrawal from friends.

Physical: Physical Abuse may involve hitting, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to the child. This can be noted unexplained physical injuries, fear of returning home, fear of medical help, aggression or bullying.

Neglect: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or

Psychological needs. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. This can be noted by constant hunger, inappropriate clothing, low self-esteem, poor social relationships, compulsive stealing or scrounging.

IT IS VITAL THAT ALL INCIDENTS OR OBSERVATIONS, HOWEVER INSIGNIFICANT-SEEMING, ARE LOGGED BY THE OBSERVER(S) IN THE APPROPRIATE ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORT BOOK/FORMS.

Workers (paid and voluntary) are provided with the following guidance on how to respond to disclosures by children of abuse.

DO:

- Do treat any allegation extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child as if you believe what they are saying.
- Do tell the child they are right to tell you.
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Do be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why.
- Do tell the child what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening.
- Do take further action- you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse- tell your nominated person immediately.
- Do write down everything said and what was done.

DON'T:

- Don't make promises you cannot keep.
- Don't interrogate the child- it is not your job to carry out an investigation - this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this.
- Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.
- Don't say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse.
- Don't do nothing – make sure you tell the session leader or SSO immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.

The observing worker, paid and voluntary, will make a verbal report to The RO or the SSM, and also will make a written report outlining in adequate detail what was heard, seen, reported, alleged etc. Verbatim quotes from a child are important, as is the retention of anything which gave cause for concern such as a drawing, painting, writing etc. The worker will sign and date the report. The SSM will read and countersign the report, with any comments/ recommendations, and pass it to the Responsible Officer who also will read and countersign, completing the form with comments etc. as appropriate.

If more than one worker has an observation on the same incident on the day in question, a separate report is to be made by each worker and treated as above. The SSM will ensure the reports are cross-referenced and dealt with as one.

At the same time, the SSM will afford worker[s] the opportunity to discuss the matter and

will note any matters which should be taken Hotline Meals Service from the discussion. Workers should not feel constrained in expressing their concerns on any such matter in such a discussion -

THE BASIC PRINCIPLE IS THAT THERE CANNOT BE TOO MUCH DETAIL OR DISCUSSION WHERE THE SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IS CONCERNED.

Many reports will be purely minor in nature. It is important to treat them with due seriousness, however, in case there already exists information within the organisation concerning a child or e.g. a related child.

After discussion with workers as in 8.6 above, where the matter is serious enough to warrant the RO being brought in, the SSM will contact the RO who will either attend the meeting or make arrangements to meet the relevant people together as soon as possible. The RO **MUST** attend if there is a serious level of allegation or evidence of abuse which may endanger a child or children.

The SSM will ensure the Responsible Officer has as much background, supplementary detail about a child or an incident as possible. The SSM will keep records in such a way as will enable appropriate cross-referencing of reports. The object is that any persistent pattern is identified as soon as possible.

At such a meeting which the RO will chair and the SSM minute (or have minuted), the evidence and concerns will be reviewed and a decision about action will be made. The decision will be recorded and filed in the appropriate restricted files.

The RO will take an appropriate course of action as follows:

Immediate Report to Duty Officer at Social Services and/or Police: this covers any situation where, in the judgment of the RO, after due consultation with workers involved and the SSM, there is perceived to be an immediate danger to a child or detection of criminal offences against a child or other form of obvious, ongoing/future/recent serious harm. The number to ring for a child who is resident in Hackney is 02 8356 4779, and for a child who is resident in Haringey is 020 8489 5402/5447. [The RO and SSM will know whether Hot Line Meals Service has a current liaison within social services. If this is the case e.g. the senior child welfare social worker in the Social Services Area Office, this person can be contacted during office hours in lieu of the Duty Social Worker]. Where the Duty Social Worker cannot be located, the Police should be informed and told of this problem in locating the Social Services officer. Where a child seems at imminent harm of danger/ injury or worse, then the RO is authorized to make a complaint to the Police in order to secure immediate action and protection of a child. **NO PROTOCOL SHOULD EVER INHIBIT THIS COURSE OF ACTION IF IT IS TRULY WARRANTED.**

Most situations will not require reference as in a. or b. above. It will be more appropriate for the RO to raise them with a designated liaison contact at Social Services. The SSM's involvement with any discussion is seen as desirable for the detailed information this can afford. The RO or the SSM should never hesitate to contact the Social Services liaison person on an informal basis as soon as possible. Such situations may arise e.g. where there is insufficient hard evidence or facts to warrant a complaint/ urgent formal referral, but there may be enough in terms of e.g. previous reports to justify referral of concerns in an informal manner.

The point of making informal reports should not be **under-estimated**. It may well be that, from a safeguarding viewpoint, the information given to social services in a piecemeal manner, informally, is potentially a major way of picking up issues as they develop. Our piece of information may be one part of a jigsaw - it may even be the first piece. It may complete "a puzzle".

The RO, and all workers, should bear in mind that they may not be privy to all or indeed much information about a given child's situation, as held by Social Services - but our item of information may assist in promoting a child's welfare.

FEEDBACK AND REPORTING

Workers will always wish to be assured that, having made a report, appropriate action has been taken. The SSM should always attempt to give such feedback from a reporting situation as is appropriate. The RO him/herself may be short on information once a report has been made to Social Services, who for reasons of confidentiality may be unable to give specific details. However the RO should press for a description about progress from the Social Services end, usually through the liaison machinery but if necessary by direct action as high as may be warranted if a serious matter has been reported. The RO is entitled to ask what specific action has been taken so far, whether the police have been informed etc.

In giving any feedback to workers, the RO has to bear in mind "need to know" and confidentiality. So, the worker who made a report can be told what action has been taken by the RO including any representations that e.g. the police should be brought in etc. This will usually take place via the SSM through whom such liaison will occur.

In reports on safeguarding matters to the Board of Trustees, the RO will report any formal report to the Police or the Duty Social Worker, omitting children's and families' names, and also any informal report made by the RO to Social Services via our liaison with them.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Responsible Officer (RO) is Mrs Yutta Domb, 020 8211 7107
The Senior Staff Member (SSM) is Mrs Rapaport 02088029925
The Nominated Safeguarding Officer is Mrs Yutta Domb
Social Worker 020 8356 5500
Local Police 020 8808 1212
NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000
Childline 0800 1111

Hot Lines Meals Service

INCIDENT RECORD FORM

Organisation:
Your Name: (Observing Officer)
Your Position: (Observing Officer)
Child's Name
Child's Address:
Parents/Carers Name and Address:
Child's Date of Birth:
Date and Time of any Incident:
Your Observations:

Exactly What the Child Said and What You Said

(Remember; do not lead the child – record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary)

Action Taken so far:

Signature:

Print Name:

Counter Signature:
(Session Leader/Line Manager)

Print Name:

Date:

Covid 19- ADDENDUM TO SAFEGUARDING POLICY – October 2020

SCOPE OF ADDENDUM

This addendum has been added to the Safeguarding Policy, in light of the effects of Covid 19. It will remain in force as long as service provision is impacted on site or off site by Covid 19; staff or volunteers work or volunteer remotely and non-face to face activities are in place to enable services and programmes to continue. Together with the Safeguarding Policy, and other policies to which it is linked, it forms part of our stated aims of robust consideration for the safety of volunteers and other people and protecting them from harm. In all activities where there is provision for children and young people, staff, volunteers, management and others will be bound by our Safeguarding Children Policy and any subsequent addendum, which may be added as the need arises.

Hotline meals are aware of government Covid 19 guidance by which all operations are governed. Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following important safeguarding principles.

- The best interests of Volunteers come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any volunteer, they should continue to act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy will be available at all times
- It is essential that unsuitable people do not gain access to volunteers

COVID 19 SECURITIES

- During the acute stages of Covid 19 and as long as restrictions do not allow for face to face provision, Hotline Meals will continue sending meals to service users homes in line with the government guidelines.
- Face to face activities will only be offered when safe operation in line with government guidance will allow. Measures such as social distancing, and hygiene protocols will be followed at all times. This will incorporate elements such as no sharing of food or equipment, and more intensive, logged cleaning regime of facilities.
- Volunteers will receive clear notice regarding staying alert and controlling the spread of the virus through isolation when appropriate and instructions as to when and how to access services. There will be controlled access to sites, not allowing any unnecessary visiting
- There will be appropriate signage at multiple locations flagging different Covid messages to raise awareness for staff and service users around how to stay safe and stop the spread of Coronavirus.

RAISING AWARENESS AND REPORTING CONCERNS

We will be mindful as to the effects of exposure to trauma; crises or bereavement and the effects of lockdown can have on the emotional welfare and stability of families. Staff and volunteers should be alerted to any early warning signs and Hotline Meals will give consideration to staff or volunteer training needs in this regard. There will be a focus on the emotional health and wellbeing of staff and volunteers during these challenging times, so that everyone performs at their optimum levels.

It is still vitally important that any concerns about volunteers or young people should be raised immediately with Designated Safeguarding Leads in line with protocols and/or addendums to Safeguarding policies.

Designated Safeguarding Leads can be contacted in the usual way to deal with any concerns in a timely and appropriate manner.

Whether working remotely or on site, any contact with service users still offers opportunities to pick up concerns which should be acted upon in line with existing policies or special arrangements that may have to be put into place. It is better to err on the side of caution and to remember that information being shared might be the missing piece of the jig saw puzzle.

RECRUITING NEW STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

We continue to recognize the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers applying to work or volunteer are safe to work. We continue to follow Safer Recruitment procedures which could be supplemented with remote meetings.

In urgent cases, verification of scanned proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check will be accepted, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents (in line with revised guidance from the DBS). New staff or volunteers must still present the original documents when they first attend work.

SAFEGUARDING INDUCTION AND TRAININGS

Safeguarding training will continue to be offered in line with our Safeguarding Children Policy. New staff and volunteers will be given safeguarding induction including a focus on the Covid 19 Addendum for as long as it is operational. They will be required to familiarize themselves with the Safeguarding Children Policy and Addendum.

Existing staff/volunteers will be briefed on the Addendum to the Safeguarding Policy with which they should familiarize themselves and use as part of operating safely.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS CONTACT DETAILS

Name Mrs Yutta Domb

Telephone number- 02088029925

Name Mrs Chani Rapaport

Telephone Number 07826446670

Date: 21/09/2021

Signed

