

The Movement for Reform Judaism (MRJ) and RSY-Netzer Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy

MRJ and RSY-Netzer are committed to promoting the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults and protecting them from harm. We acknowledge that abuse can occur in all communities.

Our ethos is underpinned by the definition of safeguarding as a proactive, preventative and protective culture, embedded in our organisation through policies and practices and reflected in our day-to-day interactions.

MRJ and RSY-Netzer are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in which everyone feels safe, is able to thrive and also feels able to challenge inappropriate behaviours and attitudes in a constructive and timely manner, in line with UK legislation and our values.

We promote the ethos that 'Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility' (Working Together, 2018). As well as actively promoting best safeguarding practice internally, we work closely with our member synagogues and partner organisations to ensure consistent and appropriate approaches with clear lines of responsibility and accountability. Each synagogue is responsible for ensuring they have appropriate safeguarding systems in place and MRJ is able to offer support with this, if requested.

MRJ is committed to the Nolan Principles

- Promoting the interests of children and vulnerable adults
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

MRJ is also committed to the Six Principles of Safeguarding (Care Act 2014)

- Empowerment: People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- Prevention: It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- Proportionality: The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Protection: Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- Partnership: Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- Accountability: Accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice.

This policy is informed by the following legislation and statutory guidance: Children Act (1989); Children Act (2004); Care Act (2014); Children and Social Work Act (2017); Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).

Our values

MRJ's Core Values are:

- Creating inclusive, egalitarian communities, valuing difference
- Bringing Holiness into the world by seeking meaning in our lives and a just society for all
- Treasuring the autonomy of the individual, Jewish tradition and the insights of the wider world

RSY-Netzer is based on four ideological pillars of:

- Reform Judaism
- Reform Zionism
- Tikkun Olam (repairing the world / social action)
- Livluv (personal development)

We promote British values and encourage people to explore and develop their identities as British Jews. We adhere to the Prevent Agenda, challenging all forms of extremism, radicalisation or exploitation.

Our commitment to providing a safe environment is further embodied in the following organisational documents and policies, which are available on request:

- MRJ and RSY-Netzer Safer Recruitment Processes
- MRJ Equal Opportunities Policy
- MRJ Grievance Procedure
- MRJ Lone Working Policy
- MRJ Whistle-blowing Policy
- MRJ Harassment and Bullying Policy
- RSY-Netzer Volunteers Agreement and Codes of Conduct (Brit Kehilla for leaders and participants)
- RSY-Netzer Procedure of Justice

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone within RSY-Netzer and MRJ.

All Trustees, Employees and Volunteers are responsible for:

- Promoting working practices that ensure the wellbeing of everyone, particularly children/young people and vulnerable adults
- Completing training in Safeguarding, as relevant to their role. This training will be clearly outlined in our annual training plan as part of our Safeguarding Audit.

- Ensuring they understand what abuse is and are aware of how to obtain help and advice in relation to safeguarding and child/adult protection
- Ensuring they report any safeguarding disclosure, allegation or concern to an appropriate person, as laid out below.
- Understanding that they may need to disclose confidential information in the interests of safeguarding children/young people and vulnerable adults

Madrichimot (leaders) are volunteers aged 16 – 24. Madrichimot who are under 18 are subject to the Child Safeguarding and Protection Procedures, as well as being responsible for adhering to the guidelines.

RESPONDING TO ABUSE

In the following procedure, the word 'individual' is used to refer to a child or adult who may be experiencing abuse. The following procedure is summarised in flow chart form in Appendix B.

The appropriate process for responding to abuse is:

- Recognise
- Receive and Reassure
- Record
- Report
- Refer
- Review

RECOGNISE:

What is Abuse? Abuse occurs in all ethnic, religious and regional groups and in all classes. Children or Adults may be abused by family members (adults, young people and children), family friends, peers, professionals and carers, by members of a Jewish community and by strangers. We can become aware of abuse happening within MRJ or RSY-Netzer, or outside of our organisation.

Abuse comes in many forms, and the signs and symptoms of abuse are varied:

- The [NSPCC](#) has defined the categories and signs of child abuse. A Child is anyone under 18; we also refer to children as 'young people'.
- [SCIE](#) has defined the categories and signs of adult abuse.
- Section 42 Care Act, 2014 states that Adult Safeguarding duties apply if an adult (18+):
 - Has needs for care and support (whether or not the Local Authority is meeting those needs)
 - Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
 - As a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it

Abusive acts, including those which do not fall under safeguarding, may be referred to the Criminal Justice System; MRJ can provide some pastoral support to people in such situations, as well as support in reporting and signposting to appropriate services.

Inappropriate behaviour between Adults within MRJ and RSY-Netzer will be dealt with under our policies and procedures as listed above.

If you have a concern and are unsure if it is a safeguarding matter or not, discuss your concern with a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

RECEIVE and REASSURE:

When an individual discloses abuse to you, stay calm and be reassuring. Try to convey that:

-

- You are glad the individual told you.
- That you believe what you are being told - people rarely lie about abuse and it is never our place to make judgement on this.
- You cannot keep this information secret but it will be confidential; it will only be shared with people who need to know and we will inform the individual when information is shared (unless this presents a risk to them or others).
- Listen to and accept what is being said, without judgement.
- Do not ask questions unless essential to do so; if you must ask a question, do not ask a 'leading' questions, for example, "What did s/he do next?" (This assumes s/he did something else), or, "Did s/he touch your private parts?" Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the young person's) in any later prosecution in court.
- Do not pressure the person to tell you more than they offer.
- Reassure the individual but only so far as is honest and reliable, for example, don't make promises you may not be able to keep, such as, "I'll stay with you", or, "Everything will be all right now".
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the individual refers to it. For example, you could say: "You are not to blame." "You are not alone, you're not the only one this sort of thing has happened to."
- Do not criticise the perpetrator; individual may love him/her and reconciliation may be possible.
- Do not share your personal experiences or opinions.
- Recognise that individuals may be concerned or conflicted about sharing information with statutory organisations. However, in all cases the welfare, well-being and protection of the individual must be paramount and we have a duty to refer cases of abuse or suspected abuse.

Consider others who may be involved or impacted by the disclosure, and discuss with your DSL if/how to communicate with them.

For cases of peer-on-peer/child-on-child allegations, contact the DSL and follow our specific procedure for such cases.

Everyone who is aware of the situation should be reminded about confidentiality and the sensitivity of the information; young people impacted by the disclosures of others should be encouraged to speak to their parents or a professional only and not to peers, and parents should be reminded about confidentiality.

RECORD:

- As soon as possible all information should be recorded in written form. Record as much detail as possible, including names, address, timings and contact information. For staff and volunteers in RSY-Netzer, this should be recorded directly onto CPOMS.
- Write down the disclosure as it was told to you. Do not include your own language, judgement or assumptions. Stick to what was actually said by the individual.
- Note any observations on behaviour/emotional state and injuries/physical signs.
- Always remain objective.
- Note time, location and date of disclosure and sign the notes.
- Do not investigate the matter yourself; remember not to ask questions or to speak to others about the concern.
- Pass this information and a verbal account to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.
- It is your duty to report this information – you cannot keep it a secret.
-

REPORT:

If you are concerned about imminent risk to a child or young person please call 999.

Anyone with a concern about the possible abuse of a child or vulnerable adult should report this to one of the following people:

- Debbie Doobay, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) ddoobay@rjuk.org/ 020 8349 5723
- Sarita Robinson, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) sarita@rjuk.org / 020 8349 5716
- Leah Harris, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) lharris@rjuk.org /020 8349 5661

If you are unhappy with the response of the DSL, please contact:

- Daniel Benjamin, Lead Trustee for Safeguarding DBenjamin@rjuk.org

See section below regarding GDPR and Confidentiality.

REFER:

The decision to refer an individual to the Local Authority Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) should be made in conjunction with a DSL. However, anyone can contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) directly if a DSL is unavailable, the matter is urgent or you disagree with the DSL decision not to refer.

Concerns regarding staff, volunteers or other people in positions of trust and responsibility, will be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). This decision and referral will usually be made by a DSL, however anyone can contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) directly if a DSL is unavailable, the matter is urgent or you disagree with the DSL

decision not to refer. Such concerns will also be addressed by the relevant Employment/Volunteer Management policies and procedures.

Contact details for the MASH and LADO are available online; search MASH/LADO and your local region.

Concerns regarding Rabbis and Cantors should be referred to the [Joint Ethics Committee](#) of the Assembly of Reform Rabbis and Cantors and the Conference of Liberal Rabbis and Cantors, as well as to the Statutory Authorities where appropriate.

REVIEW

Following any internal safeguarding incident, MRJ and RSY-Netzer are committed to reviewing the case to learn and develop our understanding and practice. This review will be led by a DSL working in conjunction with the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding. In cases where the conduct of these people is in question, an independent review may be commissioned.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations, 2018)

The effective management of safeguarding requires a multidisciplinary approach supported by sharing information in a timely manner with appropriate professionals.

Sharing information with other professionals is a fundamental aspect of enabling a child/vulnerable adult's safety and protection. No professional should ever intervene alone. All concerns must be shared with appropriate others; in the first instance with a DSL.

Personal data is information that relates to an identified or identifiable individual. Information which is relevant to safeguarding will often be data which is considered 'special category personal data' meaning it is sensitive and personal.

It is good practice to inform the individual, and where appropriate their parents/guardians, of how and with whom their information will be shared. However, The GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 includes 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a condition that allows the sharing of information without consent - information can be shared legally without consent, if we are unable to, or cannot be reasonably expected to gain consent from the individual, or if to gain consent could place the individual or another individual at risk.

All Trustees, employees and volunteers have a duty to disclose information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a statutory authority where failure to do so could result in a child/vulnerable adult experiencing abuse.

Detailed contemporaneous records must be kept by all involved. These should separate fact, reported information and opinion. All records must be submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours, and ideally on the same day. All records will be submitted will be held in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

SUPPORTING STAFF / LEADERS / VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED IN SAFEGUARDING

Responding to and managing suspicions and allegations of abuse demands much of professionals and volunteers, who should be appropriately supported in this role. MRJ and RSY-Netzer recognise that involvement in child protection can be stressful for staff and madrichimot (voluntary leaders). It is therefore committed to offering help and support for staff/madrichimot who have concerns. Staff can gain support from their Line Manager, the Designated Safeguarding Leads or access the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Madrichimot can be supported by the Wellbeing Officer on events or the Designated Safeguarding Leads. Further support may be accessed if necessary.

COMPLAINTS

Complaints about the failure to follow these procedures should follow the MRJ Complaints Procedure.

References:

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life>
2. <https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/six-principles>

Dated: March 2024

Review Date: March 2025

The Movement for Reform Judaism's Safeguarding Flow Chart

