

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policies

1 Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

2 Rehabilitation of Ex-Offenders Policy

3 Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention & Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information Policy

Policies Statement

Mary Ward Centre fully recognises its responsibilities for protecting and safeguarding the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults. We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse and exploitation. Our policies apply to all staff, trustees and volunteers working in the college. A child is defined as a person under the age of 18. A vulnerable adult is defined as a person aged 18 or above who is, or may be, in need of community care services because of mental disability or other disability, age or illness and who is, or who may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

1 Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

1. All Mary Ward Centre management and teaching staff employed after 1st January 2007 undergo an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check prior to employment and records are kept in secure, non portable, staff personnel files. Administrative support staff employed after this date undergo a standard CRB check prior to employment. All staff employed before this date are undergoing CRB checks, the planned completion date for this is April 2010.
2. All Mary Ward Centre staff have been checked against information held under Section 142 of the Education Act 2002, previously called List 99. Records are kept in staff personnel files.
3. CRB checks that have been obtained by another employer are accepted as long as the member of staff has been continuously employed since the date of the disclosure and the check was conducted within the last 3 years.
4. All Mary Ward Centre staff must advise their line manager if they are convicted of an offence subsequent to the date of their last CRB disclosure.
5. Safe recruitment and selection procedures are followed and apply to staff and volunteers. Recruitment advertising, job adverts and job descriptions all state that a CRB check is required, two written references are taken up and offers are made conditional upon satisfactory background checks. Vacancies are advertised widely in order to ensure a diversity of applicants and a variety of selection techniques are used.
6. The named designated person for implementing the policy is Ceri Williams, Principal, Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AQ, telephone 020 7269 6061. The designated deputy is Suzanna Jackson, Vice-Principal, Quality & Curriculum, Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AQ, telephone 020 7269 7071.

7. Appropriate Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection training forms part of the annual staff development and is delivered by Camden's Early Years service. Staff receive refresher training at least every 2 years. The training raises awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children and helps crèche workers identify children at risk of significant harm.
8. All staff, volunteers and trustees know the name of the designated Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer and her role.
9. A safe environment has been provided for all which operates under the Mary Ward Centre's Health and Safety policy. Risk assessments and Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection safeguards are in place.
10. Mary Ward Centre has Public Liability and Employer's Liability Insurance Cover in place with Zurich Municipal.
11. Appropriate reporting procedures are in place. The Centre Board of Trustees wish the matter to be raised internally in the first instance. This is so every chance is given to investigate and take appropriate action before the disclosure is in the public domain and all parties are given the opportunity to act professionally and with propriety. If the allegation or suspicion of abuse is discovered by a student then they should inform a member of staff as soon as possible. Staff members should contact the Clerk to the Board of Trustees and explain the situation. If the allegation is about the Principal or the Clerk to the Board the disclosure should be made to the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board. If you have reason to believe that the Chair or the Vice Chair of the Board may be implicated in the malpractice then you should contact the Treasurer of the Mary Ward Settlement. If you feel you have been victimised or deterred from raising your concerns, this matter must be made known to the person investigating your complaint. If this is proven the matter will be treated seriously and will be regarded as a serious disciplinary offence.
12. All staff, volunteers and trustees understand their responsibility to be alert to the signs of abuse.
13. Examples which would cause concern of abuse are:-
 - Any unexplained mark or bruise
 - Any major changes in a child or vulnerable adult's behaviour
 - Any comment made by a child or vulnerable adult, which may give cause for concern
 - Any unexplained soreness or marks on the body when nappy changing or washing hands
 - Any deterioration in a child or vulnerable adult's well-being
 - Any inappropriate sexual language or sexual behavior
14. A judgment will be made by the Principal in consultation with the Senior Crèche Worker and the Vice Principal, Curriculum & Quality as to whether the local Child Protection Unit should be informed. The protection of the child must always come first, and the Centre will err on the side of caution in reporting such instances.
15. Local support contact details include Camden Police Community Safety Unit telephone: 020 8733 6470/6472/6473/6474, 10 Lambs Conduit Street, London WC1N 3NR and Camden Council Information and Advice Team telephone: 020 7974 4000, Adult Social Care, Room 121, 79 Camden Road, London NW1 9ES. To discuss concerns about a child's welfare there is the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline (24 hours) telephone: 0800 800 5000, textphone: 0800 056 0566 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk; NSPCC Asian Child Protection Helpline telephone: 0800 096 7719; Childline 0800 1111. The Local Safeguarding Children Board for Camden: Children, Schools and Families, Crowndale Centre, 218 Eversholt Street, London, NW1 1BD telephone: 0207 974 6639.

16. It is the duty of all Mary Ward Centre staff, trustees and volunteers to follow this policy.

Rehabilitation of Ex-Offenders Policy

1. As an organisation using the CRB Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Mary Ward Centre complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
2. Mary Ward Centre is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, culture, income, social class, HIV status, political belief, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
3. We have this written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
4. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
5. A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
6. Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to the PA to the Principal, and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
7. Unless the nature of the position allows Mary Ward Centre to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
8. We ensure that all those in Mary Ward Centre who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
9. At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
10. We make every subject of a CRB Disclosure aware of the existence of the CRB Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.
11. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention & Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information Policy

General principles

As an organisation using the CRB Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Mary Ward Centre complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information and has a Data Protection policy available on the N drive.

Storage and access

Disclosure information is kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, we will consult the CRB about this and will give full consideration to the data protection and human rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the

name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Umbrella Body

The Mary Ward Centre does not act as an Umbrella Body (one which countersigns applications and receives Disclosure information on behalf of other employers or recruiting organisations). Nor is it a registered body for the purpose of making direct applications to the CRB. All our CRB applications are made through the Working Men's College, which does act as an Umbrella Body. We have taken all reasonable steps to satisfy ourselves that they will handle, use, store, retain and dispose of Disclosure information in full compliance with the CRB Code and in full accordance with this policy.

October 2008

(Amended August 2009)