

# Child Protection Policy

Policy Pack 2026

*Safeguarding is embedded across all areas of MAVUK's work and underpins how we support children, young people, adults, families, and communities.*

<b>Organisation</b>	Mothers Against Violence UK (MAVUK)
<b>Primary safeguarding contact</b>	Ian Cameron Swanston   Chairperson   office@mavuk.org   07869751806
<b>Version</b>	2026 edition

## At a glance

Primary child protection contact: Ian Cameron Swanston | office@mavuk.org | 07869751806

Emergency: call 999 if a child is at immediate risk of harm.

This document applies to all MAVUK work with children and young people under 18.

## Document control

<b>Document owner</b>	MAVUK
<b>Policy lead</b>	Ian Cameron Swanston, Chairperson
<b>Applies to</b>	Trustees, staff, volunteers, facilitators, sessional workers, and contractors
<b>Approval date</b>	19 April 2026
<b>Review frequency</b>	Annual or sooner if guidance or practice changes
<b>Next review due</b>	19 April 2027

## 1. Child protection statement

MAVUK is committed to protecting all children and young people who come into contact with our services. The welfare of the child is paramount.

Every child, whatever their age, disability, sex, gender identity, race, faith, culture, language, sexuality, care status, or lived experience, has an equal right to protection from abuse and neglect.

## 2. Purpose and application

This policy explains how MAVUK prevents harm, recognises child protection concerns, responds to disclosures, and works with parents, carers, and statutory agencies.

It applies to all staff, trustees, volunteers, mentors, counsellors, facilitators, and contractors working with or around children and young people in MAVUK activities.

## 3. Current framework

This 2026 edition reflects Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, and current information-sharing guidance for practitioners.

It should also be read alongside MAVUK's safeguarding policy, code of conduct, complaints arrangements, online safety expectations, and safer recruitment procedures.

## 4. Key child protection principles

- The child's welfare is paramount.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Children must be listened to and taken seriously.

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- Prompt information sharing can be essential to keeping children safe.
- MAVUK staff and volunteers do not investigate abuse; they recognise, record, and report.

## 5. Designated contact

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Child protection concerns should be reported to Ian Cameron Swanston, Chairperson, at [office@mavuk.org](mailto:office@mavuk.org) or 07869751806.

If a child is in immediate danger, call 999 and then inform MAVUK as soon as possible.

## 6. Categories and indicators of abuse

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- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Bullying and peer-on-peer abuse
- Child criminal exploitation and county lines
- Child sexual exploitation
- Online abuse and grooming
- Domestic abuse within the home
- Forced marriage, honour-based abuse, and female genital mutilation
- Radicalisation and extremism

## 7. Good practice when working with children

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- Work in an open environment and avoid unobserved situations wherever possible.
- Treat children and young people equally, with dignity, respect, and appropriate boundaries.
- Use language, activities, and relationships that are age-appropriate, safe, and empowering.
- Involve parents and carers appropriately unless doing so would place a child at greater risk.
- Record accidents, injuries, incidents, and safeguarding concerns promptly.

## 8. Practice to avoid

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- Excessive time alone with a child away from others
- Inappropriate physical contact or rough/sexually provocative games
- Private messaging, gift-giving, secrecy, or favouritism
- Taking a child to your home or meeting them outside agreed arrangements
- Sharing bedrooms or inviting children into adult sleeping areas on trips or residentials
- Humiliating, belittling, threatening, or shaming behaviour

## 9. Safer recruitment and suitability

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MAVUK will take reasonable steps to prevent unsuitable people from working with children. This includes role descriptions, application and interview processes, identity checks, references, induction, supervision, and DBS checks where roles are eligible.

Staff and volunteers must read this policy and understand their safeguarding responsibilities before undertaking unsupervised work.

## 10. Responding to a child disclosure

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- Listen carefully and stay calm.
- Take what the child says seriously.
- Do not promise secrecy.
- Do not ask leading questions or investigate.
- Record the child's words as accurately as possible.
- Report the concern immediately, or on the same working day, to the safeguarding lead.

## 11. Reporting concerns

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Concerns may arise from a direct disclosure, an observation, an injury, a behavioural change, information from a third party, online activity, or a pattern of risk.

Where there is concern about a parent, carer, professional, or another child, the concern must still be reported. The need to protect the child takes precedence over discomfort or uncertainty.

Where the threshold is met, the safeguarding lead will refer to children's social care and/or the police.

## 12. Allegations against staff and volunteers

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Any allegation that a person working on behalf of MAVUK has behaved in a way that harmed, may have harmed, or may pose a risk to a child must be escalated immediately.

Management action, suspension decisions, and referrals will be handled in line with safeguarding and employment procedures, with the welfare of children remaining paramount.

## 13. Confidentiality, records, and support

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Information will be managed on a need-to-know basis. A child should never be given a promise that concerns will be kept secret.

MAVUK will keep clear records, follow up referrals, and support children and families appropriately while safeguarding processes are under way.

## 14. Review

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This policy should be reviewed annually and updated sooner if national guidance, law, local practice, or MAVUK delivery changes.

## Appendix A. Safeguarding reporting flow

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1. Recognise a concern, disclosure, injury, pattern of risk, or unsafe behaviour.

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2. Respond calmly, prioritise immediate safety, and call 999 if there is urgent danger.
3. Record what was seen, heard, or disclosed as soon as possible.
4. **Report the concern immediately, or on the same working day, to Ian Cameron Swanston at [office@mavuk.org](mailto:office@mavuk.org) or 07869751806.**
5. The safeguarding lead will decide next steps, including referral to statutory services where required.
6. Store records securely and continue to support the individual appropriately.

### Child protection reminder

Do not promise secrecy to a child.

Do not question a child repeatedly or try to investigate.

If parental involvement may increase risk, seek safeguarding advice before making contact.

## Appendix B. Cause for concern form

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Complete this form as soon as possible after a disclosure, observation, or incident. Use the person's own words where you can and distinguish clearly between fact, observation, and opinion.

**Date and time of concern**

**Name of child or young person**

**Age / date of birth (if known)**

**Address / location (if known)**

**Name of person completing form**

**Role**

**What was seen, heard, or disclosed?**

**Immediate safety action taken**

**Description and location of any visible injuries or marks**

**Details of alleged abuser / source of concern (if known)**

**Who was informed and when?**

**Referral made to external agency?**

**Signature / date**