

Milton Keynes Deaf Community – Safeguarding Policy

1. Policy Statement

Milton Keynes Deaf Community is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all members and participants, particularly children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Everyone has the right to feel safe, respected, and supported at all times, and we aim to create an environment that protects individuals from harm, promotes wellbeing, and encourages openness and inclusion.

Although we are a volunteer-led community group, we recognise our responsibility to take reasonable steps to protect those involved in our activities and to act swiftly and appropriately when concerns arise.

2. Our Safeguarding Principles

We believe everyone has the right to live free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

We aim to be inclusive and accessible, understanding the unique needs of the Deaf community.

We strive to respond to concerns promptly, fairly, and with confidentiality.

We promote a culture of openness, respect, and safety in all our activities.

We will work in partnership with relevant agencies when necessary to support individuals at risk.

3. Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to:

All volunteers and organisers within Milton Keynes Deaf Community

All members and participants attending events or engaging with our group

Any third-party providers working with us on activities (e.g., facilitators, venues)

4. Responsibilities

Group Organiser (Safeguarding Lead): Carron Huggett

Responsible for responding to concerns, keeping basic records, and seeking support or advice where needed.

Volunteers:

Expected to act in a way that protects others from harm, report concerns, and promote a safe, inclusive environment.

5. Recognising Abuse

Abuse can take many forms, including:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Financial or material abuse
- Discriminatory abuse
- Digital or online abuse

In the Deaf community, communication barriers may mean signs of abuse are missed or misunderstood. It is important to be observant, respectful, and not dismiss someone's concerns.

6. Reporting a Concern

If you are worried about the safety or wellbeing of someone in our group, or if someone discloses something to you, here's what to do:

Stay calm and listen carefully.

Reassure the person that they are being taken seriously

Do not promise confidentiality—explain that you may need to pass information on to help keep them safe.

Report the concern to the Group Organiser (Safeguarding Lead) as soon as possible.

Record basic details of what happened, using the person's own words if possible. Date and sign the note.

7. What Happens Next

The Safeguarding Lead will:

Listen carefully and assess the situation

Seek advice if necessary (e.g., from local adult safeguarding services or NSPCC)

Take appropriate action, which may include contacting external agencies

Maintain confidentiality while ensuring people are kept safe

8. Contact Information

Milton Keynes Council – Adult Safeguarding

Phone: 01908 253772 (office hours)

Out of hours: 01908 226699

Email: adult.access@milton-keynes.gov.uk

NSPCC (for children's safeguarding)

Phone: 0808 800 5000 (24/7)

Police (if someone is at immediate risk):

BSL999

Text 000

Dial 999

9. Reviewing the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if significant changes occur. Feedback from the community and volunteers is always welcome to help us strengthen our safeguarding approach.