



SAFEGUARDING

Protecting Children & Young People
and Recruitment

The Matrix Trust

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January 2010

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1.1 THE MATRIX TRUST (Hereafter Matrix) Unit 3 Meadow House, 11 Woodbridge Meadows, Guildford, GU1 1BA

Matrix has a growing work with children and young people. Matrix takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to its care.

1.2 As part of the mission of Matrix, it is committed to:

- listening to, relating effectively and valuing children and young people whilst ensuring their protection within Matrix activities
- encouraging children and young people to grow in their knowledge and experience of God
- encouraging and supporting parents/carers
- ensuring that children's/youth workers are given support and training
- having policies and procedures for identification of and responding to safeguarding issues.

1.3 Matrix recognises that some children and young people are the victims of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect or domestic violence).

This policy, entitled **Protecting Children & Young People, and Appointing Children's Workers** sets out agreed guidelines relating to the following areas:

- responding to allegations of abuse or neglect, including those made against leaders or members of Matrix
- appointing children's/youth workers
- supervision of activities and practice issues
- helping victims of abuse

1.4 Matrix is committed to the following key principles:

- The needs and interests of young people are paramount
- All people working under the auspices of Matrix carry a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people

1.4.1 Matrix will act in ways that will facilitate the development of good practice by:

- Preventing abuse through safe recruitment policies, and the development of safe and secure environments for working with young people, and appropriate supervision and support for staff.
- Creating supportive environments which enable young people to speak out.
- Identifying instances in which there are grounds for concern and initiate / take action to keep them safe.
- Protecting young people from abuse by ensuring appropriate policies, practices and procedures are in place and challenging poor or unsafe practice.
- Ensuring that all Matrix workers have access to appropriate levels of information, instruction, and training to ensure that they are able to understand and implement policies, practices and procedures.
- Supporting young people who may have been abused and supporting those working with them.
- Where Matrix involves other adults to support their work with young people, it will

- ensure that appropriate CRB disclosures are received for those working closely with or supervising young people.

1.5 Matrix staff are not responsible for establishing if abuse is taking place, merely the reporting of possible concerns.

2.0 RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES BY A YOUNG PERSON

It is not easy to give precise guidance but the following may be of help:

RECEIVING WHAT IS SAID

- Accept what is said (it is **not** your responsibility to decide if it is true)
- Keep calm
- Look at the child directly
- Reassure the child they are right to tell; acknowledge their courage, but do not promise 'everything will be alright'; it may not be
- Be honest
- Let them know you will need to tell someone else - don't promise confidentiality
- Even when a child has broken a rule they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened
- Never push for information or interrogate

RESPONDING: HELPFUL THINGS TO SAY OR SHOW

- I am taking what you say very seriously
- Avoid 'leading' questions; ask open ended questions. Eg: Not 'Did your father hit you?' but 'did anything else happen?'
- Where necessary, clarify what has been said to you
- Do not jump to conclusions
- Explain what you will do next to help

AVOID SAYING

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it
- Are you sure this is true?
- Interrogation
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else"
- Do not promise to "Keep a secret" or give the impression you will not tell anyone else

RECORDING

- Make brief notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour)
- Record the actual words / phrases used by the child / young person
- Record dates, times, location of events
- Include a description of what was happening (the activity) immediately before the disclosure

- Take care to distinguish between fact, opinion, observation and allegation
- Keep your original notes and attach if appropriate to the formal record
- Remember , this document could be used in court
- Do not discuss your suspicions with anyone other than nominated Matrix Co-ordinator for safeguarding. (See Appendix 5)

REPORTING

- Negotiate getting help as quickly as possible
- Contact designated Matrix staff (See 3.1 below)
- Consider what immediate short term support is needed by the child / young person
- Think of you own support needs

CONCLUDING

- Again, reassure the child that they were right to tell you and that you are taking what they say seriously.
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens
- Immediately refer to nominated Matrix Co-ordinator for safeguarding.

NB:

- Where an injury is clearly visible, this should be noted on the report, but the young person should not be asked to undress so that an injury can be seen.

3.0 WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT THAT ABUSE MAY HAVE OCCURRED

- 3.1 You must report concerns as soon as possible to **DAVE SLINN** (hereafter the “Co-ordinator”) who is nominated by Matrix to act on their behalf in referring all allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. In the absence of the Co-ordinator the matter should be brought to the attention of **IAN NICHOLSON** (hereafter “Deputy Co-ordinator”).
- 3.2 If the suspicions in any way involve the Co-ordinator then the report should be made to the Deputy Co-ordinator. If the suspicions in any way implicate both the Co-ordinator and the Deputy Co-ordinator, then the report should be made in the first instance to **INGLIS WIGHTMAN**, 10 Sheeplands Avenue, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 2SG **Tel ??????????????????** who will inform **Surrey Children’s Social Care, Tel 0300 200 1006**
- 3.3 **You should not discuss your suspicions with anyone other than those nominated above.**
- 3.4 It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make direct referrals to the Surrey Children’s Social Care, particularly if you consider inadequate action has been taken by the above.
- 3.5 **Allegations of physical injury or neglect**
Wherever possible, The Matrix Trust will discuss concerns with parents/carers and ask for consent to contact Surrey Children’s Social Care, or support them in obtaining further help (unless the child is considered to be in more urgent need of protection).

In an emergency, where there are allegations of physical or sexual abuse, advice will be sought from Surrey Children's Social Care. In such circumstances, Matrix staff may not communicate with parents/carers unless advised otherwise by appropriate professionals.

3.6 Allegations of Sexual Abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Co-ordinator will:

- a) Contact Surrey Children's Social Care directly. The Co-ordinator will **NOT** speak to the parent (or anyone else) until advice has been sought.
- b) Whilst allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse will normally be reported to the

Co-ordinator, the absence of the Co-ordinator or Deputy Co-ordinator or Inglis Wightman should not delay referral to Surrey Children's Social Care or the Police.

- c) Matrix will support the Co-ordinator or Deputy Co-ordinator in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.

4.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

In Child Protection terms, confidentiality means

- Letting other people know on a 'need to know' basis.
- Letting young people know you may have to tell someone if what they tell you gives you concern about their safety.
- Not engaging in gossip - being accurate and precise about what you know.

If you don't report your concerns to the Coordinator, it could put the young person in danger or fail to give the authorities the vital piece of the jigsaw they need to ensure protection. If you discuss your concerns with other people in general, it could embarrass the child/family and harm the alleged abuser if the claim was untrue. It could also attract unwanted media interest which could prejudice any enquiry/police investigation and a person's right to a fair trial.

Remember: you must never promise confidentiality to a young person - even if they refuse to tell you the problem.

Confidential child protection information must not be stored where inappropriate others have access.

5.0 WHISTLEBLOWING

It should be accepted that anyone seeing another worker using inappropriate behaviour or acting in a way which could be misinterpreted should be able to speak to the individual or the supervisor about the concern. It is also an area of working practice which should be considered during staff appraisals between the employee and their supervisor.

6.0 APPOINTMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OF WORKERS

6.1 Workers are defined as paid staff and volunteers. All prospective workers will be asked to

complete an application form. Selection and recruitment of staff will include checks for their suitability (CRB) which will be repeated every 3 years (and registration with the Independent Safeguarding Authority when it is implemented), and The Matrix Trust will endeavour to ensure all visitors/volunteers are both suitable and informed of our policy/procedures as appropriate.

6.2 Appointment and employment will include:

- Interviewing a potential worker and finding out about their past experience, attitudes, and any gaps in their work history.
- discussing with the applicant in detail the Matrix policy on safeguarding children's welfare and expectations in relation to practice issues e.g. supervision of children's activities and workers etc.
- Requesting references from previous employer (s) and others
- informing that workers will not work with young people under 16 on a one-to-one basis

except where parents have been informed and have given consent.

- Ensuring workers read a copy of this Policy and sign the Worker's Consent Form (Appendix 6)
- encouraging workers to provide regular feedback on their work.
- providing workers with a contract.
- enabling children's/youth workers to be given opportunities to meet together and with a leader to discuss work programmes/areas of concern including issues relating to discipline. (See Appendix 3)

The criteria for NOT appointing children's workers include:

- a) Individuals who have previously abused a child or where it is known that the individual has a record of violent/sexual behaviour or is subject to a current or ongoing investigation.
- b) Offences against children are addictive, so even when there has been true repentance it would be wrong to place an individual in a position of temptation
- c) Where referees or a personal interview disclose attitudes or behaviour that may be deemed inappropriate for working with children/young people
- d) If there are any concerns/reservations about appointing an individual, then alternative forms of work other than with children/young people may be found. Caution and integrity should be exercised in all situations.
- e) Concerns raised from CRB disclosures.

6.3 CRB Disclosures

Criminal Records Bureau disclosures must be applied for in respect of each member of staff and volunteer who has regular unsupervised contact with young people. The CRB administrator is John Evans.

A register of CRB disclosures must be maintained to ensure that staff and volunteers' disclosures are renewed at least every 3 years. Staff and volunteers can submit current CRB disclosures processed by other organisations if they relate to work with young people. CRB's will not be accepted if they relate to working with any other group eg vulnerable adults, as the criminal records search may not have investigated appropriate offences.

Each new CRB application must be accompanied by up to date relevant documentation. The original copy of the CRB disclosure must be seen by John Evans who will record the disclosure reference number, and date, and check the disclosure for information.

7.0 SUPERVISION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Responsible consideration must be given to each situation regarding activity, the ratio of workers to young people, age and experience of leaders, risk assessment, and emergency communication. The risk of false accusation against a leader, or placing leaders in vulnerable situations should also be addressed in determining supervision issues. (see Appendix 2 g).

8.0 ANNUAL REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed by a trustee, the CRB Administrator, and the Co-ordinator or Deputy Co-ordinator by January of each year.

APPENDIX 1

RECOGNISING WARNING SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

The following behavioural signs **may** be indications of child abuse, but they should not be taken in isolation. In the unlikely event that the Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator, or Inglis Wightman being unavailable, Matrix staff should contact Social Services directly.

INDICATORS OF POSSIBLE PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur to the body in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Instances where children are kept away from the group inappropriately
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc. which do not have an accidental explanation
- Cutting/slashing/drug abuse

INDICATORS OF POSSIBLE SEXUAL ABUSE

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Child with excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations

INDICATORS OF POSSIBLE EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Changes or regression in mood and behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also depression/aggression
- Nervousness/frozen watchfulness
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying

INDICATORS OF NEGLECT

- Constant hunger or tiredness
- Poor hygiene or state of dress
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems
- Destructive tendencies
- Low self esteem
- Neurotic behaviour
- Running away Compulsive stealing / scavenging

APPENDIX 2

ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUPERVISION OF GROUP/CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Guidance

- 1.1 Clear guidance to protect children from abuse and workers from false accusation needs to be given to include the following matters:
- a) Supervision
- ratio of adults to children. Number of adults who should be present at a specific indoor/outdoor activity or holiday event -
 - circumstances when a male or female worker should be involved, or a worker of each sex, or more than one worker
 - where possible ensure that a worker is not alone with a child but realistically acknowledging circumstances when this might be necessary or helpful. It is advisable to leave doors open or for a group to share the same accommodation.
 - where confidentiality is important (e.g. counselling a young person) ensure that others know that the interview is taking place and that someone else is around in the building
- b) Boundaries
- the level of personal care (e.g. toileting) appropriate and related to the age of the child - accepting that some children have special needs
 - guidance on touch. For example, physical contact between adults and children can be quite healthy and necessary and to be encouraged in public places. It is inappropriate in circumstances where an adult/child are on their own
 - workers should treat all children/young people with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions
 - respect the privacy of children, avoid questionable activity (e.g. rough/sexually provocative games or comments)
 - if you invite a child to your home, ensure this is with the knowledge of the team/leadership and that a parent is aware - this practice should not be encouraged
 - again, ensure that arrangements for transporting children/young people are with the knowledge of the team/leadership and has parental approval. In some circumstances it may be unwise to carry a particular child/young person on their own
 - consider carefully arrangements for residential holidays and whether adults should share sleeping accommodation with children/young people. This might be an unwise practice generally, but appropriate, say, with very young children or on an activity such as youth hostelling where it is the custom

c) Safety matters

- need to consider specific issues relating to the use of premises/equipment
 - e.g. buildings well lit and potentially dangerous activities properly supervised
- safety requirements could be advertised on posters and regularly reinforced and brought to the attention of all staff concerned

d) Feedback

- arrange regular workers' meetings to review procedures to ensure common approach, sharing of concerns and identifying other matters which may need clarification and guidance
- encourage report back to such a meeting when departure from guidelines becomes necessary - this provides protection to the individual and draws the leadership's attention to shortcomings and problem areas
- keep a written record of issues/decisions discussed at meetings, and a log book or accident record where relevant for specific projects in accordance with the Matrix Health & Safety policy

e) Helping children/young people to protect themselves by:

- teaching safety generally/strangers/good and bad secrets and touches, etc.
- helping children develop common sense rules
- talking about suspicions or situations where they feel uncomfortable
- examine the way in which we present Christian truths e.g. children obeying parents. This can be a real problem for a child who is being abused - are we telling the child to accept the abuse? Tell children that if they feel uncomfortable or that something may be wrong, they can always check things out with another adult. We need to differentiate between children's negative reaction to healthy discipline and possible indicators of abuse.
- All participants, staff, and volunteers are expected to show respect for each other and to take responsibility for their own protection.

f) Risk Assessments and Specific Guidelines

- Please note that each activity will develop specific guidelines to help to keep young people safe. These will be reviewed and developed to keep abreast of new situations and amended to reflect past experience where appropriate.
Leaders should refer to the guidelines for previous individual projects or activities.

g) Guidelines for Leader/children ratios

Ratios of helpers to young people should be strictly followed.

For over 8's there must be at least 1 helper for the first 8 children and then 1 helper for every additional 12 children.

Every group must be led by at least two adults.

When physical activities are planned staffing levels should be increased accordingly.

Adults should avoid being alone with children or young people.

Parents should be informed beforehand if it is intended to allow groups of young people to go off unsupervised – e.g. for shopping.

APPENDIX 3

GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE

1.0 WHAT IS DISCIPLINE?

Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement.

2.0 WHY DISCIPLINE?

It brings security, produces character, prepares for life, is evidence of love and is God's heart. Hebrews 12:5-12 and Proverbs 22:6.

3.0 DO'S AND DON'TS OF DISCIPLINE IN CHILDREN'S WORK:

3.1 We need to be insistent, consistent and persistent

3.2 **NEVER** smack or hit a child

3.3 Discipline out of love **NEVER** anger (Call on support from other leaders if you feel you may deal with the situation unwisely in your anger.)

3.4 Do not shout in anger or put down a child

3.5 Lay down ground rules e.g. no swearing, racism, or calling each other names, and a respect for property

3.6 Keep the ground rules simple and clear, and make sure the children understand what procedure will be taken if they are not kept.

3.7 To discipline, where possible talk to a child away from the 'group', not publicly. (Explain what they have done wrong, encourage remorse - leave them on a positive note).

3.8 Never reject a child, just the behaviour. (Encourage the child that you want them, but you are not willing to accept the behaviour).

3.9 Each child is unique, special and individual, and each child needs a different method of being dealt with. We, therefore, need to ask ourselves "Why is the child behaving like that?" Then:-

- What is the best method of disciplining and encouraging that child ?
- Work on each individual child's positives, do not compare them to each other, but encourage and build them up
- Work on relationships

- Be a good role model and set a good example. (Don't expect children to do what you don't do and vice versa.)
- Take care to give quieter and well behaved children attention and don't allow some children to take all your time and energy
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said - this avoids manipulation

4.0 SOME PRACTICAL IDEAS

- 4.1 Change voice tone, but try not to shout!
- 4.2 Separate children who have a tendency to be disruptive when together. (These children are often friends, give them a chance, perhaps warn them and only separate if they are disruptive.)
- 4.3 Have the child sit right in front of you.
- 4.4 Get a helper to sit next to the child
- 4.5 Be pro-active and encourage helpers to be pro-active and not wait to be told to deal with a situation
- 4.6 Take the child aside and talk to them, challenging them to change, whilst encouraging them on their strengths
- 4.7 Warn a child that you will speak to their parents and do so if necessary
- 4.8 If a child's behaviour is constantly disruptive, seek advice and guidance from another leader/adult
- 4.9 Don't be afraid of discipline
- 4.10 Warn them, send them outside the room (but ensure adequate supervision)
- 4.11 Encourage good behaviour
- 4.12 Remember each child is individual and unique. We need God's wisdom and love to encourage each one of them to reach their potential
- 4.13 Pray before you meet

APPENDIX 4

1.0 WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 1.1 The Disclosure of an offence may not necessarily prohibit employment.
- 1.2 Because of the nature of the work for which you are applying, this position is exempt from the provision of section 4(ii) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions Order 1975), and you are not entitled to withhold information about convictions which for other purposes are "spent" under the provisions of the Act. You must therefore declare all convictions whenever they occurred. In the event of appointment, any failure to disclose such convictions could result in the withdrawal of approval to work with children and/or young people with Matrix.
- 1.3 As an organisation, we agree to abide by the Code of Practice on the use of personal data in employee/employer relationships under the Data Protection Act 1998 as well as the expectations of the Criminal Records Bureau/Scottish Criminal Records Office.
- 1.4 Under the Protection of Children Act (PoCA)1999 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, it is an offence for any organisation to offer employment to anyone who has been convicted of certain specific offences, or included on the PoCA List or Department of Education & Skills List 99 where that employment involves regular contact with young people under the age of 18.
- 1.5 The Matrix Trust endeavours to keep abreast of changes and new recommendations affecting child protection issues and will implement any new legislation as appropriate, regardless of whether it is included in this policy or not.

APPENDIX 5

Useful Contacts and telephone numbers

The Matrix Trust Office		
Unit 3 Meadow House, 11 Woodbridge Meadows, Guildford GU1 1BA	Tel	01483 574900
The Matrix Trust Office (Out of Hours - John Evans)		07840 139 247
Child Protection Coordinator	Dave Slinn	01483 574900
Deputy Child Protection Coordinator	Ian Nicholson	07976 351 891
3rd Child Protection Contact	Inglis Wightman	????????????????
CRB Administrator	John Evans	01483 574900
Surrey Children's Social Care	Helpline	0300 200 1006
Child Line	Free confidential helpline for children and young people	0800 11 11
NSPCC	Helpline	0808 800 5000
Guildford Police Child Protection		0845 125 2222 Ext 30040

APPENDIX 6**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE WORKER**
WITH CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

I confirm that I have read THE MATRIX TRUST'S policy on protecting children and young people. I will endeavour to carry out the policy, and if there are things I do not understand or if I have reason to be concerned about a child, I will check with the appropriate leaders.

Signed _____ Date _____

This signed document will be held on the worker's personal file.