

MumsAid Safeguarding Policy¹

MumsAid is a specialist perinatal mental health (PMH) charity based in Greenwich, supporting pregnant women, new mothers and families experiencing emotional and mental health challenges. We believe that children and young people deserve the very best start in life, and to encourage this, we work with parents and the community in ensuring the rights and safety of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults. We are committed to ensuring that everyone who uses our services and works for us is safe, respected, and protected from harm. Safeguarding is central to everything we do.

MumsAid operates in accordance with the [Ethical Framework](#) defined by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy.

Our services and safeguarding context

MumsAid provides a range of services including:

- Free counselling in Greenwich to help any local mother experiencing mental health issues during pregnancy and birth
- Specialist therapeutic, befriending, advocacy, and group support for young mothers aged 21 or under
- Trauma-informed therapy
- Group and peer support for mothers of children with complex health conditions or disabilities
- Designated counselling and group support for Black and Global Majority mothers
- Text-based emotional support
- Creche-supported sessions
- Outreach and partnership work

We support individuals and families who may be vulnerable, including mothers experiencing mental health difficulties, young families, families with complex needs and families who may be subjected to discriminatory practices and attitudes within other PMH services and the wider society.

The purpose of this policy

This policy sets out how MumsAid will:

- Protect children and adults at risk

¹ To be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Adults and Child protection Policy and Procedure document that explains roles and responsibilities in further detail.

- Prevent harm, abuse and exploitation
- Provide clear guidance for staff and volunteers
- Ensure consistent responses to safeguarding concerns
- Embed safeguarding across all services
- Outline how staff can access this policy, be involved and kept informed and up to date in any reviewing process and about subsequent changes to the policy as a result of that process

Safeguarding principles

MumsAid believes that:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- The welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount
- People should be treated with dignity respect and fairness
- Early support and intervention reduce risk
- Everyone has the right to be safe from harm

Under the Children's Act 1989, updated in 2004, all staff have a responsibility for identifying, referring and supporting children and vulnerable adults at risk of abuse.

MumsAid has adopted the NSPCC definitions of child and vulnerable adult abuse:

- Sexual abuse
- Sexual exploitation
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child trafficking
- Emotional abuse
- FGM
- Criminal exploitation and gangs
- Grooming
- Neglect
- Online abuse
- Non-recent abuse
- Domestic abuse

Our Equality Statement

MumsAid recognises that in society certain groups and Individuals suffer discrimination. In line with the Equality Act 2010, we are positively committed to opposing discrimination against people on the grounds of sex, race, colour, nationality, religion or belief, class, age, disability, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, transgender status or gender reassignment, their trade union activities, pregnancy and maternity or because they have

dependents, because they have been or are in contact with mental health services, or if they have HIV/AIDS (Protected Characteristics).

In addition to our generic services, we offer services to young mothers, Black and Global Majority mothers and families of children who have health conditions or physical disabilities. We are mindful that all of these communities will undoubtedly be experiencing discrimination and additional barriers and will therefore be particularly vulnerable. MumsAid is committed to challenging any discriminatory practices and prejudices these communities may face and to ensuring our own practices, services and policies remain open and alert to any inadvertent discrimination.

MumsAid is fully committed to a policy of anti-discrimination and equal opportunities, and we welcome the enrichment and cultural diversity that follows as a natural consequence of this policy. We acknowledge that we have a duty—both morally and legally—to ensure that we are not unfairly discriminatory in our recruitment, employment or management practices, or in the services and projects we provide for people in mental distress.

We recognise that striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying, and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect, is central to ensuring equal opportunities in employment. We realise that written policies will not in themselves provide equality of opportunity and that specific and positive programmes of action are needed. We will not tolerate any behaviour, statements or practice which seek to discriminate, or suggest discrimination, with regard to an individual's abilities, background, status, race, ethnicity, belief system/religion, sexual orientation, age or gender. Anyone acting in a discriminatory manner, or found promoting anti-discriminatory views, behaviour or practice, will be subject to immediate action and potential suspension from MumsAid (see antibullying and harassment policy). This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, service users and board members:

Key risks in our work

Due to the nature of our services, safeguarding risks may include:

- Maternal mental health crisis or deterioration
- Risk of harm to self-and/or infant
- Domestic abuse or coercive control
- Social isolation and lack of support
- Online or digital safeguarding risks
- Increased vulnerability in young mothers and parents of children with complex health needs or disabilities

Our safeguarding commitments

We will:

- Provide safe environments across all services
- Reduce risk of harm, abuse and exploitation
- Respond quickly to safeguarding concerns
- Promote equality and inclusion
- Work in partnership with safeguarding agencies
- Support staff and volunteers appropriately

{Roles and responsibilities}

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** will be responsible for:

- Managing safeguarding concerns
- Making referrals to external agencies
- Supporting staff and volunteers
- Ensuring staff and volunteers access appropriate safeguarding training and are aware of internal procedures, which are compliant with the [London Child Protection Procedures Safeguarding Policy](#).
- Identifying children and vulnerable adults who are experiencing, or at risk of, significant harm
- Identifying and managing support for children who may have suffered abuse
- Being available for discussion with staff and volunteers about any cases of suspected abuse or harm
- Working with parents for the protection of children and young people
- Maintaining and reviewing safeguarding aspects of MumsAid's risk register
- Maintaining appropriate systems for record keeping and collation of information
- Setting up systems which ensure MumsAid service users, volunteers, trustees, sessional and salaried staff are all aware of the safeguarding policy and are provided with opportunities to input into the reviewing process.
- Ensuring updated versions of the policy are circulated and implemented and the old version is archived and taken out of circulation.

All MumsAid staff, sessional workers and volunteers must:

- Make sure they are familiar with, understand and follow this policy and related safeguarding procedures
- Complete appropriate safeguarding training
- Recognise and report concerns
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Make referrals when there is significant concern and take direct immediate action in the case of emergencies
- Provide and share information when appropriate

The Safeguarding Trustee will:

Commented [CH1]: I wonder whether it's worth adding an introductory sentence or paragraph at the beginning of this section mentioning that the structure of roles with responsibility for safeguarding within MumsAid is explained in the linked procedure document?

- Have oversight of safeguarding arrangements
- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation including safer recruitment
- Promote a safe organisational culture
- Ensure a risk management statement is included in the trustee annual report as good practice
- Ensure all trustee members are aware of and encouraged to contribute to our safeguarding policy and are committed to all of the above.

Our response to safeguarding concerns

Anyone who has a concern or complaint relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to the Clinical and Safeguarding Lead or if they are not available, contact one of the designated safeguarding deputies.

MumsAid will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to our policies and procedures and legal and statutory obligations. For further details refer to: **MumsAid Safeguarding Adults and Child Protection Policy and Procedures document.**

All MumsAid staff and volunteers, including counsellors and psychotherapists, are bound by the following safeguarding policies, guidance and procedures:

- Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedure.
- Anti-Harassment & Bullying Policy
- DBS policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Grievance Procedure
- Responding to Suicidal ideation while assessing suicide risk
- Confidentiality and Record Keeping
- Data Retention Policy
- Digital safeguarding
- Lone Working Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

MumsAid works in line with the following UK safeguarding law and guidance

1. [The Children Act 1989 & 2004](#): These acts are foundational to child protection in the UK. The 1989 Act introduced the concept that the child's welfare is paramount. The 2004 Act was instrumental in promoting the idea of multi-agency cooperation.

2. [The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#): This act was created in the wake of the Soham murders and led to the creation of the Vetting and Barring Scheme, which helps ensure that those working with vulnerable individuals do not pose a risk.
3. [The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#): Made changes to the vetting and barring scheme and introduced the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
4. [The Care Act 2014](#): Provides the legal framework for safeguarding adults with care and support needs from abuse or neglect.
5. [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#): While not an act, this is a government guidance document that provides statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
6. [The Mental Capacity Act 2005](#): Provides the framework for making decisions on behalf of individuals who lack the mental capacity to do so themselves. It includes principles like the assumption of capacity, the best interest of the person, and the least restrictive option.
7. [The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#): This includes the duty for professionals to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism", commonly referred to as the Prevent Duty.
8. [The Sexual Offences Act 2003](#): This outlines legal definitions of sexual offences and the safeguarding implications related to them.
9. [The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#): Makes it illegal to participate in the FGM procedure either in the UK or abroad.
10. [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#): Introduces measures on the prevention and prosecution of modern slavery and human trafficking.
11. [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**: These relate to the safeguarding of personal data, which is essential when storing information about vulnerable individuals.

Signed



Date

April 2026

Date of review

April 2027