

Why me? Staff, Volunteer and Trustee safeguarding policy and practice

26 September 2022

Policy Statement

Why me? is a provider of restorative processes and an employer of volunteer facilitators, ambassadors and staff. Why me? is committed to ensuring that all contact with and between service users and staff is safe, physically and emotionally; and that staff and volunteers work in a safe and supportive environment.

Why me? will ensure that all its policies, practices and procedures reflect and support these commitments by:

1. Rigorous recruitment and selection processes, ensuring all staff are aware of our standards and expectations and accept our ethos.
2. Ensuring all staff, associates, volunteers and trustees, are properly trained and that this is regularly refreshed.
3. Putting in place sound, tested procedures for identifying, assessing and mitigating risk; safe working practices; and reporting safeguarding issues.
4. Ensuring that our data on individuals for RJ and other purposes is held securely and protected in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) principles and Restorative Justice Council (RJC) standards.
5. Creating a supportive environment where challenge and question are welcomed.

1. Recruitment and selection

Please refer to our [Recruitment and Retention Policy](#).

Volunteer facilitators and Ambassadors

Recruited by advertisement in trade press, on our website, by word-of-mouth or recommendation by associated/CJS organisations (other service providers, partner organisations).

Selection is based on skills and experience against advertised standard criteria. Candidates are short-listed and all short-listed candidates are interviewed, regardless of their professional background, as part of the selection process.

Why me? obtains DBS clearance before any practice for roles that will involve contact with service users. We also take up two references – professional (where available) and personal.

Staff and Interns

Recruited by advertisement in trade press, on our website or by word-of-mouth among associates.

Always interviewed by an interview panel comprising a minimum of two members, and including at least two of: the Director/Deputy Director, a Board member and a senior staff member. Two references are always required, and DBS clearance if the role is assessed as requiring either Standard or Enhanced clearance.

Trustees

Recruited by advertisement in trade press, on our website or by word-of-mouth among associates.

Always interviewed by an interview panel comprising a minimum of two trustees, including the Chair of Trustees and one other. Two references are always required, and DBS clearance if the role is assessed as requiring either Standard or Enhanced clearance.

2. Induction and Training

Volunteer facilitators and Ambassadors

Following selection, all volunteers immediately receive our induction pack which is our Restorative Justice Service handbook or the Ambassador Handbook. These documents detail roles and responsibilities, working safely, safety assessment, safeguarding responsibilities and procedures and data security.

The safeguarding children and vulnerable adults policy and procedure (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1W91gSmZCFjpwG4uOTxkmW0e8tyZZFdP1/edit?usp=sharing&oid=111524144790913564123&rtpof=true&sd=true>) details staff and volunteer responsibilities and procedures for identifying and reporting abuse of adults, vulnerable and otherwise, children and young people.

All volunteers then attend an induction session explaining Why me?'s practice, standards, equality, diversity and inclusion policy and ethos.

The next stage is mandatory initial classroom-based training in RJ facilitation, if not already trained. This covers RJ facilitator practice to be able to facilitate cases of a non-complex/sensitive nature. All practitioner training, basic and advanced, includes training in personal safety and safety assessment and safeguarding, both explicitly and as fundamental to all good practice. This takes place before any practice, including observation. Followed by on the job observation and training with an experienced facilitator or coordinator. This may be any aspect of casework, from initial triage interviewing to conference.

Advanced training in complex and sensitive casework is available to volunteers who have sufficient experience at Restorative Justice Council Foundation practitioner level. This can be classroom or online based and provided by an experienced and trainer delivering restorative practice to Restorative Justice Council Advanced Practitioner level, followed by on the job observation and training. This is not currently mandatory, though strongly encouraged as it helps to reinforce the principles of all good practice.

Refresher training on complex and sensitive cases and any other aspect of RJ practice as required. This can be classroom-based or covered in facilitator forums.

Up to date training and practice logs are maintained for all volunteers.

Regular (minimum 4 per year) facilitators' forums to discuss current/recent casework and learnings, current issues and good practice. Facilitators are required to attend a minimum of 2 forums per year.

Volunteers are also required to complete online training in Standard Adult Safeguarding provided by SAFE CIC as part of their induction. A copy of their certificate is kept on file, this is valid for two years. All volunteers with roles that involve client facing work and a DBS check are required to renew their certification every two years. Volunteers of more than five years standing and not in a client facing role will have their need to undertake safeguarding training assessed on a case by case basis.

Ambassadors

Following selection, all ambassadors immediately receive our induction pack which is our Ambassador Handbook. This document details roles and responsibilities, working safely, safety assessment, safeguarding responsibilities and procedures and data security.

All volunteers then attend an induction session explaining Why me?'s practice, standards, equality, diversity and inclusion policy and ethos. Ambassadors are encouraged to attend all training opportunities that are also offered to staff, facilitators and trustees and attend regular Ambassador forums.

Ambassadors are also required to complete online training in Standard Adult Safeguarding provided by SAFE CIC as part of their induction. A copy of their certificate is kept on file, this is valid for two years. All ambassadors with roles that involve client facing work and a DBS check are required to renew their certification every two years. Ambassadors who have volunteered with Why me? for more than five years and not in a client facing role will have their need to undertake safeguarding training assessed on a case by case basis.

Staff and Interns

Following selection, all volunteers then attend an induction session explaining Why me?'s practice, standards, equality, diversity and inclusion policy and ethos. Where appropriate, staff receive RJ introductory training. RJ service coordinators should be at least at RJC Intermediate practitioner level.

Safeguarding is a regular item at staff meetings to agree and refresh policy.

Staff have access to industry events and good practice training with partner organisations. Why-me has membership of SAFE CIC with access to toolkits, expert advice and updates to legislation and good practice.

Staff are also required to undertake online training in Standard Adult Safeguarding provided by SAFE CIC as part of their induction. A copy of their certificate is kept on file, this is valid for two years. All staff with roles that involve client facing work and are required to have a DBS check are required to renew their certification every two years. The only exception to this, is the Director, who will be required to renew their certificate every two years. Staff who have been working with Why me? for more than five years and not in a client facing role will have their need to undertake safeguarding training assessed on a case by case basis.

Trustees

Following selection, all Trustees attend an induction session explaining Why me?'s practice, standards, equality, diversity and inclusion policy and ethos. They also have induction sessions with key members of the staff team.

Trustees are also required to complete online training on the Safeguarding responsibilities of Trustees. A certificate is kept on file and is valid for 2 years. All Trustees with roles that involve client facing work are required to renew their certification every two years and includes the Board's safeguarding lead. Trustees of more than five years standing and not in a client facing role will have their need to undertake safeguarding training assessed on a case by case basis.

3. Safety assessment and safeguarding - practice and reporting

Volunteer facilitators and service users

The RJ coordinator opens a safety assessment on all cases at the outset, which is maintained on myRJ case management system as a live document, updated throughout the case by the facilitators, case supervisor and RJ coordinator. Signed off by the case supervisor at all stages.

Mandatory personal safety good practice is explicitly covered in the induction pack. Largely based on existing practice.

Facilitators are trained to recognise safeguarding issues affecting service users or their families that they may encounter. This is also covered in the RJ Service Handbook. Facilitators are not required to make decisions on next steps with regards to any safeguarding issues but must report them promptly and securely, either by telephone or using their CJSM email.

Staff

All staff receive training in safeguarding and safety awareness as part of their induction. This covers workplace issues such as diversity and equality, bullying and any other form of abuse. The Employee Handbook covers the health and safety policy for staff.

Reporting

The Director is the officer responsible for keeping a record of complaints and taking appropriate action. They may delegate that responsibility to any other member of staff. The RJ service coordinator is the first recourse for volunteers' own security (pre- during- and post-visit contact) and to report abuse.

If the safeguarding concern involves a service user and not a staff member/volunteer, it is the duty of the person who identifies the issue to make a written report of the concern, with as much detail as possible, and to pass it as soon as possible to the Deputy Director, as the safeguarding lead. The Deputy Director must then identify the proper statutory body and pass it to them to address the issue and report it to the Trustee Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours.

If the safeguarding issue (including safe practice issues) involves a member of staff or volunteer/ambassador, the reporting person should pass it as quickly as possible to the Deputy Director/Director, who may take the following actions as appropriate:

- Interview all parties, taking written statements if necessary, to obtain the facts
- Seek to resolve differences between parties restoratively
- Refer for repeat training if necessary
- Take disciplinary action.

If the complaint involves the Director, the report should be made to the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Safeguarding Lead.

4. Data Security

Volunteer facilitators – service users' data

Good practice in handling and storing personal data is covered in the volunteers' induction, induction training (mandatory) and the RJ Service Handbook.

Service users' data is stored securely on myRJ only; data on people harmed, people responsible for harm and others is held separately within the case record. Access to individual cases is restricted by the coordinator to designated facilitators, the Deputy

Director, Director and the Trustee responsible for the service quality assurance. A spreadsheet with anonymous data on case progression and enquiries is stored on the GoogleDrive which is restricted to staff only.

Correspondence which deals with RJ service cases is via CJSJ email where possible, otherwise bears a security marking. Communications with service users are only made by a Why me? email address and/or mobile number.

Volunteer facilitators are all required to complete the online GDPR course provided by VSL. A certificate and record of the training is held on file.

Ambassadors

Ambassadors are required to be familiar with GDPR principles and are all required to complete the online GDPR course provided by VSL and. A certificate and record of the training is held on file.

Staff

Staff are required to be familiar with GDPR principles. Staff are all required to complete the online GDPR course provided by VSL. A certificate and record of the training is held on file.

Names and work contact details of volunteer facilitators, ambassadors and staff are not security protected, otherwise personal details are held in individual password-protected files on Why me?'s system and on the CRM system, currently Lamplight software.

Creating a supportive environment

Staff, ambassadors and volunteer facilitators are encouraged to raise concerns with their manager or with the Director/Deputy Director. These may be staff handling issues, or concern practice within the service. If the matter involves the Director, they report direct to the Chair of Trustees or Trustee Safeguarding Lead.

Volunteer Facilitators and Ambassadors (volunteers)

The RJ Service Coordinator line-manages the volunteers, who are encouraged to report issues to them. Issues involving the coordinator are reported to the Deputy Director.

The Coordinator proactively maintains regular contact with all the volunteers, whether actively involved on a case or engaged with other Why me? activities.

The Coordinator holds an annual review with each volunteer. These are documented and may contain action points for the volunteer or Why me?.

Why me? holds regular facilitator and ambassador forums – quarterly – which include group case discussion, policy discussion and wider issues, including safeguarding as necessary.

Staff



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Safeguarding policies are discussed at staff meetings at least twice yearly. The Director will ensure that this policy is reviewed and reported to the Board annually.

The Why me? Whistleblowing Policy is contained in the staff handbook and should be used in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy where appropriate. In the rare situations that the concerns are about the lead for adult safeguarding, it is important to refer to the deputy person. This may not be appropriate, in which case any member may personally refer directly to the Designated Adult Safeguarding Manager (or local equivalent) who will liaise with social care services, or the police, if a crime may have been committed.

Amendments and updates

Date	Section	Approved
7th January 2020	Review and reformat	Board meeting 22/04/20
28th May	Reviewed	Board meeting 22/07/20
September 2022	Reviewed	Board meeting 12.10.2022
September 2023		