

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

THE GUERNSEY ARTS COMMISSION BELIEVES IN SAFEGUARDING AND PROVIDING FOR THE INTERESTS AND WELLBEING OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS BY TAKING ALL REASONABLE STEPS TO PROTECT THEM FROM HARM, DISCRIMINATION OR DEGRADING TREATMENT WHILST RESPECTING THEIR RIGHTS, WISHES AND FEELINGS.

CONTACT LIST

Please keep these numbers somewhere accessible at all times:

CHILD PROTECTION OFFICERS FOR THE GUERNSEY ARTS COMMISSION:

[•]Laura Simpson : Tel: 01481 [•] 749262 or 07781 411 340

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:

Assessment and Intervention Team (Social workers) Tel: 01481 723182

Swissville

Rohais

St Peter Port

DUTY OFFICER (Social worker outside office hours): Tel: 01481 725241

POLICE STATION:

Police Headquarters

Tel: 01481 725111

Hospital Lane

St Peter Port

GY1 2QN

NSPCC:

Tel: 0800 8005000

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Scope

This policy has been adopted by the Commission to govern the conduct of activities organised directly by the Commission and its directors, and the employment and activities of its development officers from time to time. The principles contained in this policy may also be taken into account by the Commission when considering the standard of care exercised by organisations funded by the Commission.

Child protection standard

The aim of our standard is to ensure that it is important to recognise that we have a moral and legal obligation to ensure that when we are given responsibilities for children, we should give them the highest possible standard of care.

We aim to: -

- a) Ensure that all employment conditions and job requirements reflect our commitment to Child Protection.*
- b) Take all reasonable steps to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children, and encourage all our user groups, hirers, etc. to follow the same procedures consistently whether professional or voluntary or in full or casual employment.*
- c) Maintain a working environment free from child abuse*

Abuse recognises four main forms: -

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children or causing them to feel frightened or in danger.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of,

pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encourage children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

RESPONSIBILITY AND RECOGNITION

Arts Development Officers and Commissioners have an important part to play in the area of child protection, given their involvement in the employment and management of staff and third parties and will, therefore, be held accountable for the operation of this standard within the area or their responsibilities.

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. It is unlikely that staff, are experts in this field and it should be stressed that the statutory responsibility for the welfare of children is that of the Service for Children and Young People. The NSPCC has a helpline, which can offer valuable advice.

INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Indications that a child is being abused include:-

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on part of the body not normally prone to such injuries, for example the trunk, upper arms or neck.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
- Someone else - a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of another child
- Unexplained changes in behaviour over time e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engages in sexually explicit behaviour in games or play.
- Is distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship will normally be expected.
- Has difficulty in making friends.
- Is prevented from socialising with other children.

- Displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Loses weight for no apparent reason.
- Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.

This list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is of course not proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is stressed, however, that it is not the responsibility of the Commission or its staff to actively investigate or prove that abuse is taking place, but it is their responsibility to act upon any concerns.

LISTENING TO THE CHILD

The person receiving information from a child who claims he or she has been abused should:-

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child.
- Tell the child that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell.
- Take what the child says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what a child who has speech disability and or differences in language says. Do not probe. Do not lead.
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum necessary to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Always reassure the child, but do not make promises of confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments.
- Make a full record of what has been said, heard and or seen as soon as possible. This guidance is as much for the protection of the child concerned as the person party to allegations which may have been made.
- If possible, have another person present.

RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

The Commission and its staff are not responsible for deciding whether or not child abuse is taking place. They are however responsible for reporting suspicions to the Services for Children and Young People which has a statutory duty to ensure the welfare of a child.

- **If a Commissioner or member of staff has concerns that a child may be suffering abuse the incident must be reported to the designated Child Protection Officer for the GAC.**

It is the responsibility of the Child Protection Officer to inform the Duty Officer at the Services for Children and Young People without delay. Adequate arrangements should be in place to allow this to happen even when the person in charge is not available. The NSPCC operates a free phone helpline on 0800 8005000 which can provide guidance 24 hours a day.

If you have evidence of serious allegations, you should act as quickly as possible.

RECORDING INFORMATION:

Information to be provided to the Services for Children and Young People or the Police should include:

- The nature of the allegation.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries.
- The child's account, if he or she can give one, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Any times, dates or other relevant information.
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- Reporting the matter to the Police or the Services for Children and Young People should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. It is useful to keep a record of the name and designations of the person telephone messages were given to.
- Records should be securely maintained and only viewed by appropriate Personnel, Services for Children and Young People or the Police.

EMPLOYMENT ISSUES:

There is evidence to show that abuse, which takes place within a public setting, is rarely a one off event.

False allegations of abuse are rare but certain basic guidelines will help safeguard children, staff, volunteers and the organisation concerned.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF

Anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. It is essential that all staff use the same procedures consistently.

- Consent should be obtained from applications for Police and Social checks.
- Candidates should confirm their identity through official documents, producing originals or documents certified by an independent professional.

- Development Officers should verify the authenticity of qualifications and references directly, including any teaching or professional qualifications.
- At least two references should be taken up, preferably at least one regarding previous work with children.
- The Commission reserve the right to approach any previous employer, checking with former employers the reason why employment ended: identifying any gaps or inconsistencies and seeking an explanation where necessary.
- Managers should have effective measures in place to ensure the confidentiality of information received in relation to applicants.

STANDARD AND PROCEDURE

Our standard will ensure that children are protected and kept safe from harm. Everyone involved in the care of children will know what to do if there are concerns about abuse and where procedures are kept. Documents recording suspicions should be kept securely.

TRAINING

It is clearly recognised that checks are part of the process to protect children from possible abuse. These must be operated in conjunction with appropriate training so that they are aware and sensitive to potentially abusive situations. All staff that work with children must receive suitable and appropriate training to raise awareness of their role in recognising indicators of abuse and understanding the procedures for providing child protection.

SUPERVISION

The Child Protection Officers of the Commission will be sensitive to any concerns about abuse, and act on them at an early stage. They will also offer appropriate support to those who report concerns.

COMPLAINTS

A well-established complaints procedure will encourage suspicions of abuse to be reported at an early stage.

GOOD PRACTICE IN THE CARE OF CHILDREN

Situations where abuse may occur can be minimised by: -

- Always being publicly open when working with children. Avoiding situations where employees, volunteers and individual children are completely unobserved.
- In dressing rooms and back stage areas, children should be supervised by adults who hold a Guernsey Enhanced Disclosure; it is best practice to ensure that employees and volunteers work in pairs.
- It is preferable that a male and female member of staff supervises mixed activities.
- Individual Commissioners and/or members of staff should avoid spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others.

Those working with children should never: -

- Engage in rough, physical, sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child even in fun.
- Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted on.
- Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.

It should be reported to one of the Child Protection Officers if any of the following occur:-

- If a member of staff accidentally hurts or distresses a child in any way
- If a child appears to become sexually aroused
- If a child misunderstands something which that person has done.

The Child Protection Officer will make the parent/carer aware of the incident.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Any deliberate reckless or repeated failure to follow the provisions of this policy and the attached code of conduct may be taken into account by the Commission when deciding whether to commence disciplinary proceedings against a Commissioner or member of staff. Any gross breach of this policy will constitute gross misconduct for the purpose of any contract of employment and may result in immediate suspension and/or termination of employment.

GUERNSEY ARTS COMMISSION

FUNDING GUIDELINES – CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

CODE OF CONDUCT

All members of the Arts Commission staff come into contact with members of the public on a daily basis, including children and vulnerable adults. In recent years, various statutory rules have been introduced with regards to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, along with guidelines for organisations to minimise the risk of an incident occurring or being alleged. It is, therefore, sensible to have a set of simple guidelines within the Arts Commission that staff can follow when dealing with these groups of people. Most of these are common sense but for the purpose of completeness and to remove any doubt, the following guidelines are to be followed:

- Treat everyone fairly, professionally and with respect, recognising their right to personal privacy
- Be aware of situations that may present risks and plan to reduce these risks as far as possible. Recognise that caution is required in any one-to-one situations with children or vulnerable adults (e.g. if a child falls over do not take them to another room alone to clean up the wound. If this is unavoidable, keep the door of the room open and ensure you are within sight of another member of staff)
- Provide access for children and young people to talk to others about any concerns they have
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes and behaviours they do not like
- Remember that someone else may misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned
- Report to one of the Arts Commission's designated Child Protection Officers any child abuse concerns without delay. This includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect. Please also contact them for further information on the various indicators of abuse. The Arts Commission believes in safeguarding and providing for the interests and well-being of children by taking all reasonable steps to protect them from harm, discrimination or degrading treatment whilst respecting their rights, wishes and feelings. The current designated Child Protection Officers within the Arts Commission are:

[•] Laura Simpson Tel. 01481 [•] 749262 or 07781 411 340

- If you hear or see something which concerns you, even if you are not sure, always refer to the Child Protection Officer who will discuss your concerns with you and take the appropriate action.

- Do not spend time alone with children and vulnerable adults (this includes escorting them to the toilet) – plan activities so that more than one person is present or, at least, other people are within sight and hearing distance. This is an insurance against false accusations.
- Do not take children alone in a car, even for short journeys, unless this is unavoidable for safety reasons. If this is unavoidable, make sure another member of staff is aware it is happening and ensure that the child is sat in the back of the car.
- Avoid inappropriate physical or verbal contact with vulnerable adults or children.
- Do not physically restrain a child or vulnerable adult, except in exceptional circumstances (for example to prevent injury to themselves or others). If restraint is completely essential it should be carried out with reasonable force.
- Avoid being drawn in to inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour, such as tantrums or crushes
- Avoid showing favouritism to any individual
- Never make suggestive remarks or gestures, even in fun
- Never invite a child or vulnerable adult to meet you outside your work building or outside of your working hours
- Do not trivialise or exaggerate child abuse issues
- Do not rely on just your good name to protect you
- Do not exchange personal telephone numbers with children.
- Do not engage children on personal social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter. Instead direct them to the GAC Facebook page or the GAC blog via www.arts.gg. Children under the age of 13 should not be accepted as 'friends' online as this breaks the terms and conditions of use for most social networking sites,
- Try to use a family email address for email exchanges with children. If you need to use a child's personal email address always cc another adult within the organisation on all email exchanges.

APPENDIX I

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES: -

Please ensure you are aware of and understand the following:

- Dignity at Work Policy (available from the Human Resources Officer, Culture and Leisure Dept.)
- Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy (available from the Human Resources Officer, Culture and Leisure Dept.)
- Child Protection Policy & Procedures (the Departmental Policy is currently being reviewed. Short training workshops will be available to explain this Policy further once this has been finalised. For more information, contact one of the designated Child Protection Officers)

If there are any queries on the above, please contact Laura Simpson / Joanna Littlejohns

APPENDIX II

FUNDING GUIDELINES (CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES)

All organisations in receipt of funding from the Guernsey Arts Commission (the "Commission") are expected to have a Child Protection Policy in place unless they can demonstrate that they do not conduct or organise activities in which children or vulnerable adults participate. Please take time to read the following guidance for applicants for funding. If you need further advice contact us on 01481 749262.

1. Introduction

Charities and organisations are under a general legal duty of care to ensure that those benefiting from or taking part in their activities are not harmed in any way. They must accordingly take all reasonable steps within their power to ensure that this does not happen.

This document details the expectations the Commission has regarding child protection policies and procedures of all agencies and organisations that provide arts or cultural activities to children, young people and vulnerable adults with funding from the Commission. This policy has been developed in line with the provisions of "Keeping Arts Safe" (Arts Council England, April 2003). The Commission has its own child protection policy which has been developed to apply to the activities of the Commission itself or its employees (whether seconded or otherwise). A copy of that policy is contained on the Commission's website.

2. Policy statement

Children, young people and vulnerable adults benefit from their involvement in arts and cultural activities provided by arts agencies and organisations, including those organised directly by the Commission. It is the duty of such agencies and organisations to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are safe and protected from harm whilst engaging in these activities and to have policies and procedures in place to promote safe working practices and a clear understanding of what to do if abuse is suspected or disclosed.

3. Definitions

A child includes a person up to and including the age of 18. The term 'young person' is not a legal term and refers to the age ranges of the official definition of a child. There is no standard definition of 'vulnerable adult' in law, but the Commission has adopted the following definition in line with the Arts Council of England:

"Vulnerable adults are people who are or may be in need of community care services because of mental disability or other disability, age or illness, and who are, or who may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation."

The Guernsey Arts Commission has adopted the following definitions and categories of abuse for the purposes of developing this policy:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

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Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

4. Procedures

4.1. Each organisation receiving funding from the Commission is (except in limited circumstances) expected to have in place a Child Protection Policy. Organisations that already have a policy in place will be asked to send a copy of their Child Protection Policy as part of the additional information they send in support of their applications for funding. Organisations that should but do not have a Child Protection Policy will be expected to develop one and no grant awards will be made until a policy is in place and a child protection officer is appointed.

4.2. The Commission has developed a written code of behaviour which outlines good practice when working with children and young people. The code is available from the Guernsey Arts Commission's website and organisations receiving funding from the Commission will be referred to it.

4.3. Organisations receiving funding from the Commission will have to put in place policies and procedures which seek to ensure that inappropriate persons do not gain access to children, that staff are trained and supported in ensuring children's safety and that good practice is established and monitored. These procedures should include reviewing an artist's experience, training and qualifications in relation to the specific project for which they are being employed.

All adults who are working with children in projects funded by the Commission must be checked for criminal convictions via the Guernsey Police. This rule applies also to trainees and volunteers. Applicants for grants will be required to confirm that this process has been satisfactorily completed. Failure to disclose information or giving false or misleading information in order to obtain a grant may constitute a criminal offence.

4.4. Organisations will have to pay due respect in their Child Protection Policy to issues of diversity and equal opportunities, as for different reasons, disabled and children from ethnic minorities may be particularly vulnerable to abuse.

4.5. The Commission will have the right to review a funded organisation's child protection policy and procedures at any time upon request. It is the responsibility of organisations to review and update their policies and procedures in light of developments in their own practice and any law or legislation relating to protection issues.

4.6. The Commission uses a regular supply of photographs of children and young people taking part in arts and cultural activities sent in by funded programmes for our newsletter, website, presentations and launch events as well as for press purposes. Organisations will have to make sure they have obtained permission from the children and young people in the photographs and their parent or guardian before sending them to the Commission and take reasonable steps to ensure that reproduction of a child's photograph (or a photograph of a group of children) does not upset any child or put any child at risk. We will assume that any photographs sent to the Commission by funded programmes are safe for publication.

Guernsey Arts Commission
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