

Guidelines for Child Protection 2012

Every adult working in the arts has a responsibility to safeguard and protect from harm the children and vulnerable adults (VA) they come into contact with. It ensures that children and VA can enjoy and benefit from great arts experiences in a supportive, respectful and safe environment, as well as giving a framework for best practice to adults working in the arts, safeguarding them against false allegation.

Definitions

A child includes a person up to and including the age of 18. The term 'young person' is used to indicate that older teenagers do not think of themselves as children and covers both children and adults aged 14 to 25. It is not a legal term. There is no standard definition of 'vulnerable adult' in law, but the GAC 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."

Does my organisation or project need a child protection policy?

YES, if...

- We will be working **with** children or VA to produce the work.
- We will be supervising children or VA with or without their parents or guardians present.
- We will be running workshops which children or VA will be invited to attend.

Some examples...

- A group of visual artists creating and painting a mural with teenagers.
- Your show requires child actors or dancers to perform in it.
- You are organising a gig showcasing young bands (under 18).

NO, if...

- We will not come into contact with children or VA at all.
- We will be creating work **for** children or VA to enjoy (please give the content of this work due consideration if this is the case)

Some examples...

- There will be children in the audience but not performing onstage.
- You are commissioned to make a piece for a day centre for adults with disabilities.

What should be in a Child Protection Policy?

A Child Protection Policy does not have to be a complicated, lengthy document. It needs to tell you and your organisation **what** to look for, **who** to contact with your concerns and **how** to record your concerns. Your policy should include:

- Aims of the policy.
- Name a **Child Protection Officer** within your organisation.
- Indicators of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional and neglect)
- What to do if a child or VA discloses something to you or you suspect abuse.
- Who to contact with any disclosures, concerns or questions.

- How to record your concerns.

You might also decide to include a Code of Conduct to be followed by anyone working with children and VA and a set of dos and don'ts for best practice.

What should your Child Protection Officer do?

Your CPO is responsible for making sure your policy is implemented. They are the person you go to with any concerns or disclosures and the person that keeps written records of these. They will then refer to Services for Children and Young People, or the Police. **It is not the responsibility of the CPO to investigate concerns, disclosures or allegations.** In addition, the CPO is responsible for the annual review of your policy.

What to do now

Guernsey Police Enhanced Disclosures.

If you are an organisation needing to undertake a large number of checks you will need to become a registered organisation with Guernsey Police in order to request checks and received information pertaining to the checks requested. This is a simple procedure and will require you to fill out a form. If you are an individual you can approach the GAC to carry out the check on your behalf. In this instance information pertaining to the checks will come to the GAC as well as to the individual. **Satisfactory enhanced disclosures must be in place before the commencement of any work with children or VA. Please note that checks take a minimum of 8 weeks to be completed and must be in place before the event takes place.**

Child Protection Policy

You can download a template for a child protection policy from our website and adapt it to suit your organisation's needs.

The NSPCC website (www.nspcc.org.uk) contains a wealth of information regarding the safeguarding of children and is a useful resource.

Individuals

As an individual artist it is not really necessary for you to have your own child protection policy, although of course you will need to still adhere to good practice in respect of child protection and know how to report concerns and to whom. You are welcome to use the GAC child protection policy as your guide or adapt our organisations template to suit your requirements. You are, however responsible for reporting your concerns.

I'm still not sure...

If you have any questions, or would like more information, please contact Brett Klement, the GAC's Child Protection Officer on brett@arts.gg or 709749.

Guernsey Arts Commission

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