



# **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY**

**Updated March 2019**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

## **HIGHLIGHTS' SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN and VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY**

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### **1. Aims**

Through its various arts activities Highlights, and the companies and artists it engages, have the capacity to be involved with people of all ages and abilities. It is therefore Highlights' duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in Highlights arts activities by ensuring that its policies and procedures promote safe working practices, together with a clear understanding of what to do if abuse is suspected or disclosed. Highlights will examine its practice in relation to children, young people and vulnerable adults and will ensure that appropriate policy and procedures are in place to both meet the requirements of the law and to deliver best practice in its arts activities. Highlights will also review and update its policies and procedures in light of developments in its own practice and in legislation relating to protection issues.

In addition, project organisers have a responsibility to ensure that artists or project and event facilitators working with children, young people or vulnerable adults are not placed in situations where abuse might be alleged. Project planning must ensure that the skills of the artist match the needs of the situation.

### **2. Policy Statement**

Education and learning play a key role in Highlights' activities. As a voluntary organisation promoting education in the arts in rural areas Highlights believes that:

- a. the welfare of the child , young person or vulnerable adult is paramount
- b. all children, young people and vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- c. all suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- d. staff (paid and unpaid) should know how to respond appropriately

Highlights will take every reasonable step to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are safeguarded where:

- a. our own staff are directly involved in the delivery of an arts project or event
- b. our staff recruit or broker relationships between an artist or arts facilitator and a third party
- c. we fund an arts organisation for a programme of work, or for core work

If, as a result of Highlights' direct or indirect involvement, a complaint or criminal proceeding occurs between an artist or arts facilitator and a third party, Highlights will treat the situation with the utmost urgency.

### **3. GOOD PRACTICE**

Highlights will ensure good practice in all areas of the following:

#### **3.1 Project/Event Planning**

Highlights will:

- 3.1.a ensure that venues we work with have carried out a risk assessment to the best of their abilities
- 3.1.b identify at the outset the people with designated safeguarding/protection responsibility
- 3.1.c engage in effective recruitment, including appropriate vetting of staff and volunteers (see section 5 below and Appendix 3)
- 3.1.d know how to contact local authority services in the instance of having to report a concern to them (see 3.5.c below)
- 3.1 e ensure that the venues we work with have their own suitable Safeguarding Children an Vulnerable Adults Policy

#### **3.2 Physical environment**

Highlights will:

- 3.2.a always ensure that someone from the school /educational establishment, youth organisation or care setting is present and therefore meeting their responsibility for ensuring the safety of those involved
- 3.2.b monitor risks throughout the project **or event**

by ensuring that companies and venues carry out risk assessments. Highlights will have a presence at at least one workshop. Feedback will be sought both from participants and the company involved in any workshop setting.

### **3.3 Physical contact**

Highlights will ensure that contracted artists are aware of the following requirements:

- 3.3.a to maintain a safe and appropriate distance from participants
- 3.3.b only touch participants when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular arts activity
- 3.3.c seek agreement of participants prior to any physical contact
- 3.3.d ensure disabled participants are informed of and comfortable with any necessary physical contact

### **3.4 Interpersonal dealings**

Highlights will:

- a. treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults equally, and with respect and dignity
- b. always put the welfare of each participant first, before achieving goals
- c. give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- d. make the arts fun and enjoyable
- e. promote equality
- f. be an excellent role model for dealings with other people
- g. recognise that children or young people with disabilities may be even more vulnerable to abuse than other children or young people

### **3.5 Managing sensitive information**

Highlights will:

- 3.5.a have a policy and set of procedures for taking, using and storing photographs or images of children, young people or vulnerable adults (see Appendix 1)

- 3.5.b ensure careful monitoring and use of web-based materials and activities
- 3.5.c agree procedures for reporting any suspicions or allegations of abuse (see Appendix 2)
- 3.5.d ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of employees, freelancers and volunteers, including safe handling, storage and disposal of any information provided on artists or arts facilitators as part of the recruitment process

### **3.6. Professional development**

Highlights will:

- 3.6.a keep up-to-date with health and safety in artistic practice
- 3.6.b keep informed about legislation and policies for protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- 3.6.c undertake relevant development and training

### **3.7. Review:**

- 3.7.a This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

### **3.8. Availability**

- 3.8.a This policy will be available upon request. It will be available on the Highlights web site. [www.highlightsnorth.co.uk](http://www.highlightsnorth.co.uk)

## **4. Recognising Abuse**

An arts education project or arts event is often a new experience for a vulnerable child or adult, placing them in unfamiliar surroundings. Highlights will ensure that every attempt is made by project workers and event organisers to create an environment in which a vulnerable person feels comfortable and effective - physically, emotionally and intellectually. Project and event organisers will ensure that the project facilitators and/or artists and companies have been appropriately recruited and have enough training and experience to provide a safe and positive experience.

Highlights staff have a responsibility to report any concerns to the appropriate authority (see 3.5.c above).

## **5. Recruiting Safely**

5.1. Highlights will implement established procedures for effective and safe recruitment of artists. These will include reviewing the artists' experience, training and qualifications in relation to the specific project for which they are being employed (see Appendix 3).

5.2. Where appropriate, advertising may be employed. Where this is the case enough time will be allowed to take up references and Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

## **6. Working Practices**

### **Health and Safety in Arts Practice**

Wherever possible Highlights will ensure that:

- a. workshop groups will not be larger than 30
- b. the appropriate staffing ratio is in place (in youth work practice the ratio of legally responsible adults to children/young people tends to be 1:8 regardless of age. Other guidance suggests 1:10 for older children).
- c. there will be adequate space for the requirements of the project or event
- d. there will be access to a telephone in the building
- e. partners will be asked to ensure that equipment meets current safety standards
- f. we will advise all venues will carry out a risk assessment
- g. there will be a first aid box at the venue(s) which meets current Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations, together with a member of staff trained in first aid
- h. special needs are catered for
- i. no school group, youth group or group from a care setting will be left in the venue without a legally responsible staff member present
- j. the artist/arts facilitator will know the evacuation procedures and will inform the group
- k. children and young people will have a 'named person' to whom they may report any worries or concerns
- l. contact names and telephone numbers for 'named people' will be visibly displayed, for example on posters

## **8. Definitions**

'Child' is a legal term, defined as 'anyone up to the age of 18' (extensions exist for children who are disabled and for those in local authority care settings).

Young Person:

In this Policy a 'young person' is in the upper age ranges of the official definition of a child. The term has no legal status – it acknowledges that people aged 16 or 17 may not think of themselves as 'children'.

Vulnerable Adult:

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.

### **What will happen once a report has been made to the authorities?**

**Inquiries and advice will be directed to Social Services and the following actions will only be taken if the child is identified as being at risk of danger:**

A strategy discussion will take place involving social services, police child protection team, other significant professionals and the person to whom the child has confided.

A decision will be taken as to whether an investigation is needed; if so, this will be planned.

The investigation may include:

- a. an informal talk with the child
- b. a formal police/social services video-recorded interview following disclosure
- c. a medical examination
- d. an initial family assessment

If there is sufficient concern, a child protection conference will be held to decide the best course of action to protect the child and help the family. There may be criminal prosecution of the abuser.

The child will be consulted at this stage, and can participate in parts of the conference.

## **8 CONTACT NUMBERS:**

NSPCC anonymous Helpline:	0808 800 5000
Social Services Out of Hours Service:	01228 526690
Principal Social Worker (Cumbria & Eden Intake Team)	01228 607010
Penrith Police Station:	01768 864355

## **9. APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1**

Suggested procedures for taking, using and storing images of children, young people or vulnerable adults:

1. all members of staff working with children must provide a certificate of DBS clearance
2. permission will be sought by Highlights from schools before taking photographs/videos of children (using the standard pro-forma letter designed for this purpose)
3. if photographs/videos are taken, another member of staff (from the school) will always be present
4. permission will also subsequently be obtained from the school before Highlights uses images of children in any form of its literature

#### **General:**

Parents/spectators will not be able to sit in and watch classes unless agreed with a member of staff prior to the event.

### **Appendix 2**

Suggested procedures for reporting suspicions or allegations of abuse:

1. If, during a workshop setting, an artist/member of staff is made aware of the risk of harm to a child/young person/vulnerable adult (such suspected harm occurring either within or without the workshop setting), the artist/member of staff must inform the Highlights Designated Child Protection Officer (see below) before taking any action outside the setting
2. Designated Highlights Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Officer to then inform the person with legal responsibility for the child (eg. The teacher, youth or care-worker) and work with the artist/member of staff who raised the concern over a child's wellbeing to establish whether the child is at risk of harm
3. If it is agreed that a child may be at risk, to discuss the issue with the School's Designated Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Officer child and, if the child makes a disclosure, to explain to the child that it will be necessary to inform the authorities of the disclosure. To subsequently report the risk/disclosure to the police or to Social Services' child protection team
4. In the event of the Designated Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Officer not wanting to take further action and the artist/member of staff still has concerns, he/she is entitled to speak to social services themselves for advice or to make a referral if necessary



5. Revealing the identity of a child should only be done if the child is at risk of harm. The legal principle that 'the welfare of children is paramount' means that the consideration of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. Information will only be divulged on a 'need to know' basis. It must be noted that any inappropriate passing of information to any source may be detrimental to the investigation of suspected abuse and may prejudice any subsequent legal proceedings.

**Highlights Designated Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Officer:**

**Kate Lynch**

**Contact Number:**

**017683 53954**

**Designated Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Officer in Barbara's absence:**

**Rosie Cross**

**Contact Number:**

**017683 53954**

**The Highlights Management Committee member who takes leadership responsibility for the organisations safeguarding arrangements. (Safe Network Standards Children Act 2004 sec 11) :**

**Edwina Lugg**

**Contact Number:**

**0191-386-0150**

**M :**

**07703-450-212**

**E mail:**

**[rodedlugg@aol.com](mailto:rodedlugg@aol.com)**

### **Appendix 3**

Suggested procedures for effective and safe recruitment of artists:

Before being engaged to work with Highlights, all individual artists will be asked for a current DBS clearance certificate. Each artist will also be asked for two character references from reliable sources using the specific 'Highlights' form supplied at the outset with the contract.

All artists/companies working with Highlights will be supplied with a copy of Highlights Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy before participation in workshops/performances.

**March 2019**

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## 10. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY - NOTES

Safeguarding: protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults

1. These conditions only apply if you or your employees, business partners, contractors or volunteers will supervise, care or have significant direct contact with a vulnerable person during the funded activity
2. 'Vulnerable person' means:
  - a. anyone under the age of 18, or
  - b. anyone who:
    - needs (or may need) community care services because of mental disability, other disability, age or illness, and
    - ii. who is (or may be) unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation
3. You must consider all the risks that may arise from your contact with the vulnerable person, and take all reasonable steps to ensure their safety. Before having any significant direct contact with the vulnerable person, you must get the written agreement of the legal carer or guardian of the vulnerable person
4. As well as your responsibilities in paragraph 3, you must have and carry out a written policy and set of procedures to safeguard vulnerable people if during the funded activity, your employees, business partners, contractors or volunteers supervise, care for or have significant direct contact with vulnerable people
5. As part of the procedures mentioned in paragraph 4 you must check with the DBS the backgrounds and disclosures of those employees, business partners, contractors or volunteers who will, during their activities, supervise, care or otherwise have significant direct contact with vulnerable people
6. If you are the person having significant direct contact with the vulnerable person, you must contact his or her legally authorised carer or guardian and give them your consent to have your background checked and disclosures from the DBS viewed, if the carer or guardian wants to
7. You must comply with paragraph 6 even if are not required to do so under any child protection or care standards legislation, and whether the work is formal, informal, voluntary or salaried
8. We cannot advise you of your legal responsibilities in your dealings with vulnerable people, and these conditions are not legal advice. If you have any queries about your obligations, we strongly advise that you seek your own independent legal advice and also contact the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children [www.nspcc.org.uk/inform](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform)

## **11. Further Information**

The information referred to below and in the documents referred to is not legally binding, but we encourage you to read and make it accessible to all those that work for and with you on the funded activity.

The directors and trustees of your organisation are responsible for ensuring your organisation complies with all legislation relevant to the protection of vulnerable people.

The National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children's document Firstcheck gives a comprehensive step-by-step guide for organisations to safeguard children. Stopcheck is an explanatory booklet which helps organisations that provide activities or services for children to develop child protection policies and procedures. Both are available from [www.nspcc.org.uk/inform](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform)

The Arts Council also provides some guidance on safeguarding, good practice, legislation, background checking and disclosures in our publication *Keeping arts safe* and *Directory of safeguarding advisers*. You can download these from our website at [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)