

Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy 4th January 2021

Introduction

Every child or vulnerable adult deserves to be happy and secure in their activities, and their carers or parents need to feel sure that the people in charge of these activities are trustworthy, responsible and will do everything they can to keep the vulnerable adult or child safe from harm. Unfortunately, sometimes people who work with children or vulnerable adults may pose a risk and may wish to harm them. The Company therefore has put in place safeguards to protect the children, young people or vulnerable adults with whom they work. In addition, The Company wants to consider how to avoid putting their workers/volunteers in positions where abuse might be alleged, and to ensure that all their workers/volunteers know exactly what to do should abuse be suspected.

The Company will continually review and monitor this safeguarding policy and its procedures, gaining further advice and information wherever possible. All our workers and volunteers, who work with children or vulnerable adults will be made aware of our policy and procedures in order to understand their individual responsibilities and help promote best practice.

The Company's regulated and controlled activities with children or vulnerable adults includes:

- * Teaching, training, instruction or rehearsing of children
- * Teaching, training, instruction or rehearsing of vulnerable adults

The Company procedural safeguards for regulated and controlled activities with children or vulnerable adults

Disclosure & Barring Service.

All workers or volunteers of the Company who work on a regulated or controlled activity must have a Disclosure and Barring Service check that has been updated within the last 3 years. If the worker or volunteer does not have a recent DBS check, The Company will apply and pay for the checks to be made.

In the event that the DBS states that the worker or volunteer has a criminal

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record, The Company will carefully consider whether the past offence is truly relevant to the present engagement. The Company will take into consideration:

- Whether the conviction is relevant to the position.
- The seriousness of the offence.
- The length of time since the offence occurred.
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour.
- Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed.
- The circumstances surrounding the offence and explanation offered by the applicant.

Engaging workers/volunteers

All job applicants will be interviewed by a panel of at least 2 representatives from The Company. The interview provides an opportunity to discuss attitudes to working with children or vulnerable adults and our safeguarding policy.

If called for interview, the Company will encourage all applicants to provide details of their criminal record as part of the recruitment process. This information is treated in the confidence, and is purely for the purpose of protecting children/vulnerable adults with whom we work, and will not be used unfairly.

All workers and volunteers on regulated and controlled activities will be asked for photo ID (such as a passport or driving license) to verify the person's identity.

A clause in The Company's contract of engagement will state that workers and volunteers who carry out regulated and controlled activities with children or vulnerable adults must inform The Company immediately if they are charged with any criminal offence.

Appropriate diligence will be put in place when engaging people from overseas for whom the usual checks may not be readily available.

Project Management

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The Company will complete a risk assessment of any project involving children and young people.

The Company will inform workers and volunteers that all children, young adults and vulnerable adults taking part in the activities should be treated with respect, and involved in decision-making, as appropriate. Workers and volunteers will also be informed as to what physical contact is appropriate (if any).

Some projects involve working with community groups of mixed ages (both adults and children). The Company has a policy that when taking part in an activity of this type, all children under 16 must be accompanied by a responsible adult (usually parent or guardian), at all times. This will be confirmed in writing to the parent/guardian of the child.

During workshops and rehearsals with children or vulnerable adults, at least one worker and one volunteer from The Company, or one worker from The Company and one member of staff from the associated organization will be present with the children/vulnerable adults at all times. No worker of The Company will be alone with the participants at any time.

The Company runs workshops and projects for school parties and youth groups, and groups with special needs. These workshops for groups with special needs may include both adults and children, but are always run in association with organisations specialising in the care and welfare of the participating children and/or vulnerable adults, and The Company ensures that these organisations have at least one member of staff present at all times during the workshops. Prior to workshops/rehearsals, The Company will discuss with the associated organisations specialising in the care and welfare of the participating children/young adults/vulnerable adults, whether any participant will need to be accompanied to the toilet or is likely to need a change of clothes. If this is considered likely then the associated organisation must provide staff to do this, as it cannot be undertaken by workers or volunteers of The Company.

The Company's policy for children and vulnerable adults will be made available to all workers and volunteers working with the Company on projects involving children and/or vulnerable adults, and to the associated organisations we are working with.

Photography and filming of projects involving children and/or vulnerable adults.

On occasions The Company will photograph or video/film elements of projects

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involving children and/or vulnerable adults. This may be for a variety of purposes such as publicity, record taking, or it may be an integral part of the project. If filming or photography is to take place, the participants and their parents/guardians will be informed of this before the start of the project, and the reasons for the filming, and the use that will be made video footage and/or photographs, made clear. Consent will be sought from the parent/guardian of participating children. If a vulnerable adult who is participating has capacity, then their written consent will be sought, if they are not considered to have capacity then written consent will be sought from their parent/guardian or from the relevant care worker.

Procedure if abuse is suspected or alleged

If there is a concern about the possible abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult during regulated or controlled activities of The Company, then the local authority social services and the local safeguarding children boards will be immediately contacted to investigate the possible abuse.

The Company will in no circumstances investigate the abuse.

If a worker or volunteer is removed from regulated activity or controlled activity, or if they leave while under investigations for allegedly causing harm or posing a risk of harm, The Company will refer this information to the local authority social services and the local safeguarding children board.

If an allegation of abuse is made against a worker or volunteer, this individual will be removed from all The Company's work involved with children and vulnerable adults. The allegations will then be reported to the relevant services. The allegations will remain confidential at all times and will be reported to no one beyond the relevant services.

If a worker or volunteer believes that there are signs of, or suspicion of, abuse, or if a vulnerable person reports abuse happening at home or elsewhere, they should in the first instance report their concerns to Stephen Israel or Suzi Hopkins of The Company. Stephen Israel or Suzi Hopkins will appropriately record an allegation or reported incident and will maintain strict confidentiality. They will then report these concerns to the associated organisation specialising in the care and welfare of the participating children, or vulnerable adults, if this seems appropriate. If however, this organisation is implicated in the abuse, then Stephen Israel or Suzi Hopkins will report these concerns to the local authority services or LSCB.

At all times the child or vulnerable adult will be treated with care and respect, and their concerns/allegations will be listened to, and reported to the appropriate

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services.

Some Pointers on Responding to Children or Vulnerable Adults

Accept what is being said without showing shock, or disbelief.

Do not interview the child or vulnerable adult in detail

Avoid leading questions that could point the child/vulnerable adult towards giving a particular answer.

Don't promise confidentiality, you have duty to refer.

Explain what you have to do next, and who you have to talk to.

Ask the child/vulnerable adult if they have any questions or concerns.

Make an accurate written record as soon as possible.

The Trustees of The Company will review this policy on a yearly basis.

Definitions of terms

Child

A child is legally defined as anyone under the age of 18.

Vulnerable Adults

The definition of vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over and who is living in residential accommodation (such as a care home or a residential special school), living in sheltered housing, receiving domiciliary care in their own home, receiving any form of healthcare, is detained in lawful custody (in a prison, remand centre, young offender institution, secure training centre or attendance centre, or under the powers of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999), under the supervision of the probation services, is receiving a specified welfare service, namely the provision of support, assistance or advice by any person, the purpose of which is to develop an individual's capacity to live independently in accommodation or support their capacity to do so, receiving a service or participating in an activity for people who have particular needs because of their age or who have any form of disability, is an expectant or nursing mother living in residential care or, is receiving direct payments from a local authority or health and social care trust in lieu of social care services, or requires assistance in the

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conduct of their own affairs.

Abuse

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human rights. It can be a single act or repeated acts. It can be physical, sexual, or emotional. It also includes acts of neglect or an omission to act. In all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse. Vulnerable adults may also suffer additional types of abuse such as being manipulated financially or being discriminated against. Other examples of abuse include inflicting physical harm such as hitting, or misuse of medication, rape and sexual assault, or exposure to sexual acts without informed consent, emotional abuse such as threats, humiliation and harassment, exploitation, ignoring medical or physical needs, withholding of necessities of life such as food or heating. This list is not definitive.

Spent Convictions

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders act 1974, if a person convicted of an offence is not convicted again during a specified 'rehabilitation period', the conviction is 'spent' (this would not include serious criminal offences). Usually the person does not have to reveal or admit the conviction, nor can The Company refuse to employ someone because of the spent conviction. However there are some exceptions, particularly to protect children and other vulnerable groups.

DBS document

*This is a document containing information held by the police and the Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills, which can help organisations, make safer recruitment decisions. Details of the DBS service can be found on the website
www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview*