



Factory of creativity CIO
Hope Mill Theatre
113 Pollard Street
Manchester
M4 7JA
Charity No: 1183251

Safeguarding Children Policy, Procedures and Guidance

1.Scope, Definitions and Principles

Scope

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The Factory of Creativity has a responsibility to protect the interests of young people and adults at risk, and to have safeguards in place that ensure their welfare.

This policy reflects our duty to protect children and young people (defined by the Children's Act of 2004 as someone aged under 18)

This policy applies to anyone working for The Factory of Creativity – this includes but is not limited to employees, freelance staff, visiting creatives, cast members, volunteers and trustees.

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This policy refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm. As adults, professionals or volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – and in particular protecting them from significant harm – depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Individual children, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, children's social care and, quite possibly, the voluntary sector and other agencies, including youth justice services.

For those children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm joint working is essential to safeguard and promote welfare of the child(ren) and – where necessary – help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children.

All agencies and professionals should:

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances;
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans; and
- work co-operatively with parent/carers, unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.

As one of its major activities the charity seeks to serve the needs of children and young people, promoting holistic development.



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In doing so the charity takes seriously the welfare of all children and young people who come onto its premises or who are involved in its activities. The charity aims to ensure that they are welcomed into a safe, caring environment with a happy and friendly atmosphere.

The charity recognises that it is the responsibility of each one of its staff, paid and unpaid, to prevent the abuse of children and young people and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

The charity recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and regularly review procedures, which are designed to prevent and to be alert to such abuse.

The charity is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and young people and to providing supervision. The charity is committed to maintaining good links with the statutory social services authorities.

Definitions

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Physical Abuse

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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment 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, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, 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 encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

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. Neglect may occur during



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pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Please see Appendix 1 for information about spotting signs of abuse

For more information please refer to the **Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004, The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Care Act 2014, What To Do If You're Worried A Child is Being Abused (2015) Information Sharing: Practitioner's Guide (2018) and Working Together 2018**

Principles

We endeavour to Safeguard children and young people by:

- Listening to their concerns and taking them seriously
- Implementing a safeguarding policy and procedures that all staff and volunteers adhere to
- Carefully following safe recruitment procedures when recruiting new members of staff. This includes gaining two independent references, DBS checking managers and those who work with children and young people and following up any concerns. Manager DBS checks are uploaded to the update service and checked at least once a term by the Designated Safeguarding Officer DSO. The DSO's DBS check will be checked by a different manager every time. Records are made of all checks of DBS's and this is kept on the password protected HMTS IPAD. Freelance staff who have contact with children must be DBS checked or supervised by a DBS staff member throughout their visit.
- Making all staff aware of this policy as part of their initial induction process and having regular briefings and updates for all staff. Where necessary or possible, staff will be encouraged to attend appropriate training courses, scaled according to their role within the organisation. All Managers and Theatre School staff will undertake the NSPCC Child Protection an Introduction course, or equivalent. The DSO will undertake the NSPCC Designated Safeguarding Lead Training and make sure that others training is up to date. We are a Social Enterprise Support Fund (SESF) Grant recipient, and staff are able to access safeguarding training through this organisation. Hope Mill Theatre School (HMTS) staff and managers should carry out a safeguarding course provided by the NSPCC or equivalent.
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parent/carers and children appropriately
- Providing effective management and training for all staff and volunteers
- Carrying out risk assessments far all projects involving children and young people.



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- Ensuring that all projects undertaken by the Factory of Creativity adhere to this policy
- We will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religious beliefs, sex or sexual orientation.
- Ensuring that all children performing in shows (where they are being paid) are licensed, and appropriate licenced chaperones put in place. All children performing in shows (where they are not being paid) must be covered by a Body of Persons (BOP/BOPA) license. Appropriate licensed chaperones must be put in place. All chaperones should receive an induction by the DSO, which should include reading the HMTS Safeguarding Policy and Procedures – which outlines how we should work with young people within our care. All records of hours worked should be stored in a locked cabinet and kept after the show for a period of 3 years.

2. Responsibilities

Board

The FOC Board is responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding policy is in place and the Charity's legal responsibilities are being met. Policies should be reviewed at least once a year.

Lead Trustee for Safeguarding

The lead trustee is responsible for reporting top the board on safeguarding matters, holding regular meetings with the DSO/DDSO and reporting to the charity commission as required – as outlined on page 10.

The Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is responsible for:

- Appointing and training the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).
- Supporting the DSO in carrying out their work and responsibilities across the organisation.
- Ensuring compliance with this policy
- Managing any complaints about poor practice and allegations involving the DSO

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

The DSO is responsible for:

- Developing and implementing this policy, in conjunction with all FOC Staff and the Board.
- Promoting and embedding good practice across all of the organisation
- Providing advice and guidance to all staff on safeguarding
- Ensuring that staff are adequately trained in accordance with this policy
- Undertaking safeguarding risk assessments for activities involving young people
- Collecting and managing safeguarding data and records for activities across the organisation.



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- Managing complaints made against members of staff
- Referring relevant issues to the Chief Executive and/or the Board for consideration
- Leading our contact with LEA's and external Child Protection organisations.
- Ensuring adequate chaperones are in place for productions featuring children.
- Ensuring the relevant licences are in place for productions featuring children.
- Making sure staff have DBS checks and checking the update service termly.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DDSO)

The DDSO is responsible for:

- Supporting the DSO
- Covering the DSO Role when the DSO isn't available

All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring they have read, understand and adhere to this policy
- Reporting any concerns to the DSO/DDSO

3. Procedures if you have concerns about a child/young person

If a child/young person chooses to disclose something to you

- Do not promise confidentiality. You have a duty to share this information and refer to Children's Social Care Services.
- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said.
- Do reassure the child, but only as far as is honest. Don't make promises you may not be able to keep, eg: 'Everything will be alright now', 'You'll never have to see that person again'.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it. For example, you could say, 'You're not to blame'.
- Do not interrogate the child; it is not your responsibility to investigate.
- Do not ask leading questions (eg: Did he touch your private parts?), ask open questions such as 'Anything else to tell me?'
- Do not ask the child to repeat the information for another member of staff.
- Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
- Take notes, if possible, or write up your conversation as soon as possible afterwards.
- Record the date, time, place, any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not paraphrase).
- Record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.
- Report your concern to the **The Factory of Creativity's Designated Safeguarding Officer, who is Naomi Albans. Or the Deputy DSO Faye Jones within 24 hours.**

You have concerns about a child/young person but a disclosure has not happened



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- You may have concerns about a child because of something you have seen or heard but the child has not confided in you. However whatever the nature of your concerns, it is important to discuss them with **The Factory of Creativity's Designated Safeguarding Officer, who is Naomi Albans. Or the Deputy DSO Faye Jones within 24 hours.** You can do this by calling the Theatre school mobile **07725548602**. Or the box office number **0161 275 9141** and informing the box office staff that you have a safeguarding concern. The box office will then get a member of the safeguarding team to call you back. Alternatively you can email Naomi at Outreach@hopemilltheatre.co.uk or Faye at Theatremanager@hopemilltheatre.co.uk

DSO/DDSO Action To Take

In both the above scenarios the following procedure should take place

- DSO/DDSO fills in an Expression of Concern form with the person reporting the concern.
- The DSO/DDSO will use the Expression of Concern Form as a basis for an investigation.
- If the concern needs action the DSO/DDSO should refer to the relevant organisation below within 24 hours:

Manchester Social Services - 0161 234 5001 E-mail: mcsreply@manchester.gov.uk

If a child is in danger or urgent assistance is needed the police should be contacted on 999

If additional needs have been identified, but there are no immediate safeguarding concerns, then a child or family should be referred to Early Help

<https://hsm.manchester.gov.uk/kb5/manchester/directory/directory.page?directorychannel=8>

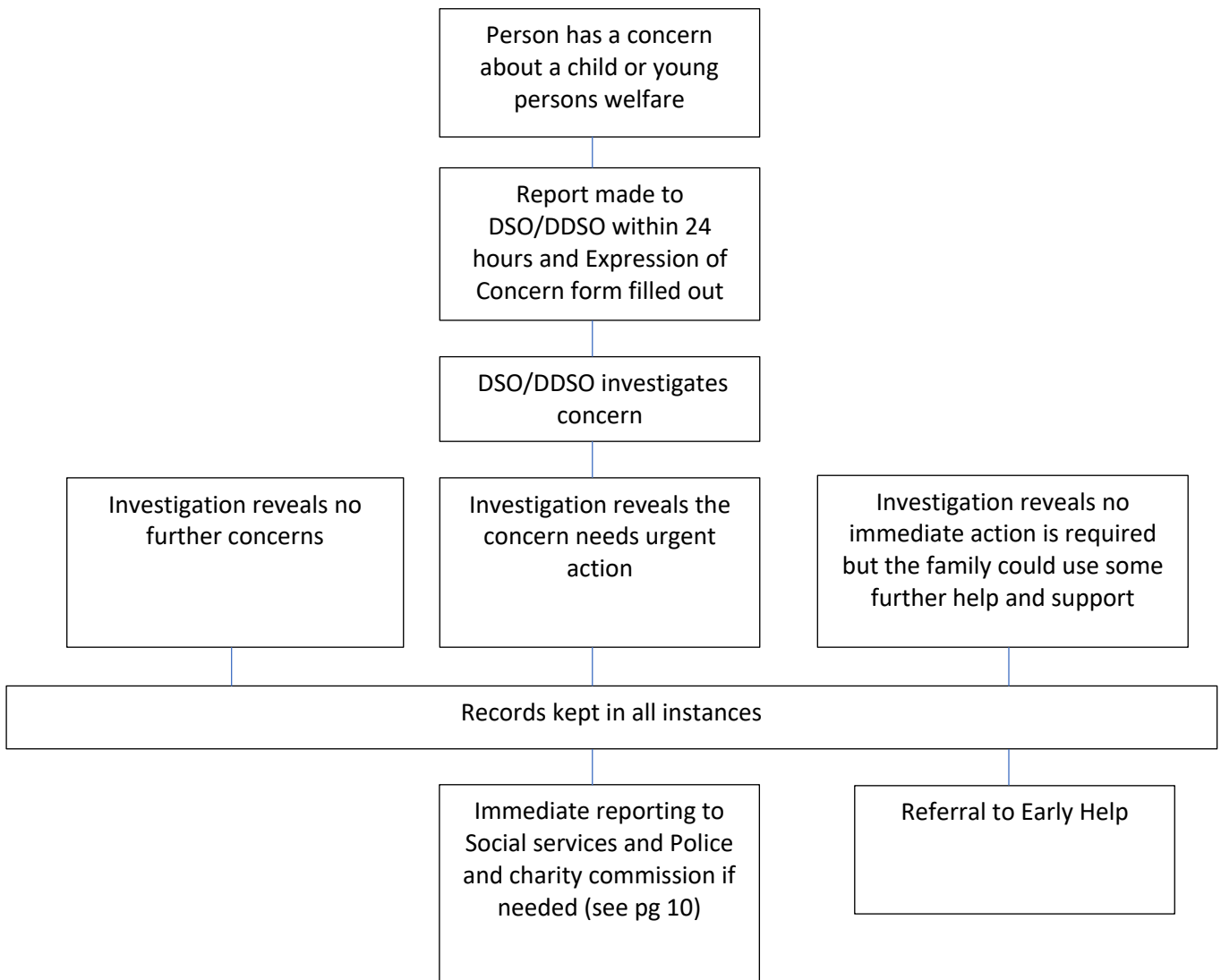
When reporting a concern you will be asked to provide as much information as possible such as the child's full name, date of birth, address, school, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the child may have, details of the parents. Do not be concerned if you do not have all these details, you should still make the call. You should follow up the verbal referral in writing, within 48hrs.

- The person reporting the concern will be informed of the outcome of this investigation when appropriate.
- if no action is required, it is important that written records are still kept and filed as they may build up a picture over time.



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See the diagram below for a summary of the process to follow.





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4. Procedure if an allegation is made involving a Member of Staff / Volunteer

THE FACTORY OF CREATIVITY is committed to having effective recruitment and human resources procedures, including DBS checking of all Managers and Theatre School staff and volunteers to make sure they are safe to work with children and young people. However, there may still be occasions when there is an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer. Allegations against those who work with children, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, cover a wide range of circumstances. The following procedure should be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way which has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates that he/she/they is/are unsuitable to work with children.

The allegations may relate to the person's behaviour at work, at home or in another setting.

All allegations of abuse of children by those who work with children or care for them must be taken seriously. All reports of allegations must be submitted to **The Factory of Creativity's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)- Naomi Albans. Or the Deputy DSO Faye Jones immediately or certainly within 24 hours.**

DSO/DDSO Action to Take

- Concern is reported to the DSO or the Deputy DSO (DDSO)
- DSO/DDSO fills in an Expression of Concern form with the person reporting the concern.
- The DSO/DDSO will use the Expression of Concern Form as a basis for an investigation. The investigation should consider whether there is evidence/information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded, whether a referral to Manchester Social Services is required and/or whether disciplinary action is appropriate. Consideration must also be given to the following three strands:
 - 1) Has a potential criminal offence taken place;
 - 2) Is the child /young person in need of protection or in need of services;
 - 3) Is disciplinary action in respect of the individual required?
- All confidential information should be locked up in the DSO cabinet in the Managers Office.
- If the concern needs immediate action the DSO/DDSO should refer to Social Services and ask for a Strategy Discussion/Meeting to be convened straightaway.



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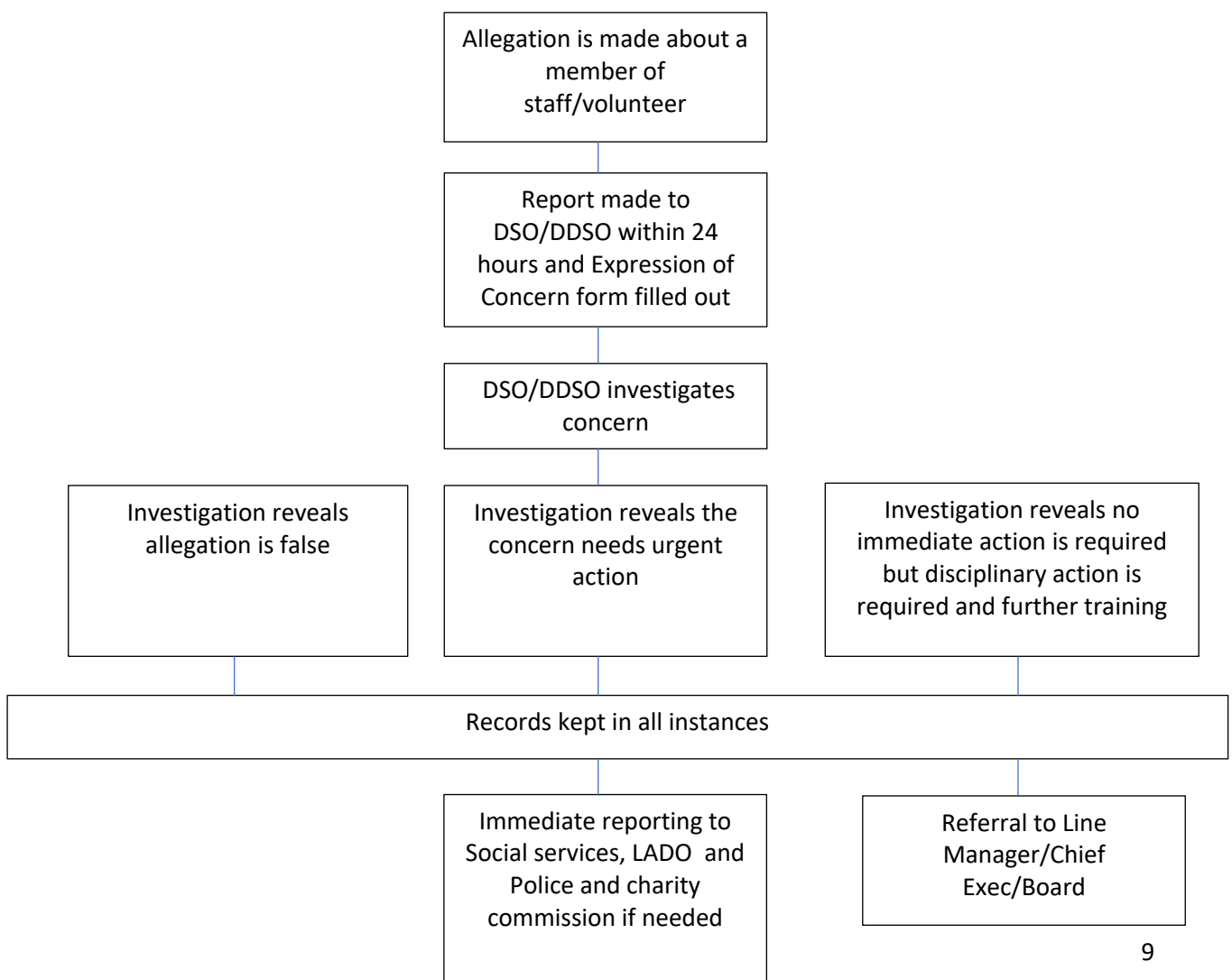
Manchester City Council's Designed Officer - 0161 234 1214.

A referral form can be found here
<https://www.manchestersafeguardingpartnership.co.uk/resource/lado/>

They can also be contacted on qualityassurance@manchester.gov.uk.

- Some allegations may be less serious and, at first sight, might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by Social Services. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation. Consequently the **Designated Safeguarding Officer** should be informed of all allegations that come to the employer's attention and appear to come within the scope of this procedure so that he/she/they can consult Police and social care colleagues as appropriate. Records should be kept in all instances and kept in a locked cabinet.

See the diagram below for a summary of the process to follow.





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There are circumstances in which incidents should be reported to the Charity Commission, which, broadly speaking, include:

- Alleged or actual abuse against children resulting in significant harm whilst the child has been in the care of the Factory of Creativity and a staff member or volunteer was allegedly responsible;
- Alleged or actual abuse resulting in significant harm to other children coming into contact with the Factory of Creativity via its work;
- Breaches of procedure or policies that have put children at risk.

Responsibility for reporting lies with the trustees and the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding (or if they are not available, the Board Chair) should report relevant incidents or events to the Charity Commission. The DSO should alert the Lead Trustee or if they are not available, the Board Chair, as soon as possible, to any incidents or events that might need reporting.

Guidance as to which incidents to report, and when and how to report them can be found in <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>.

5. Information Sharing

- You should not promise a child/young person that you will keep information they share secret. However information should only be shared on a need to know basis.
- All information is stored in a locked cabinet in a locked office that only senior management have access too.
- All registers are kept on a password protected device and paper copies locked away.

6. Other Relevant Policies

This policy works in conjunction with the following FOC policies

- Special Educational Needs (SEN) – which sets out how the FOC aims to work with children and adults with different communication needs
- Hope Mill Theatre School (HMTS) Safeguarding Policy and Procedure – which outlines how we should work with young people within our care.
- Adult Safeguarding Policy – which outlines how we safeguard vulnerable adults
- References Policy

Trained Staff

NSPCC Designated Safeguarding Lead training



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Naomi Albans

Faye Jones

NSPCC Designated Safeguarding Lead training – Advanced

Naomi Albans

Charity Trustees: Your Duties to Safeguard and Protect

Caroline Pinney

NSPCC Child Protection An Introduction

Anna Carley

Joseph Houston

Joseph Clayton

William Whelton

Faye Jones

Francesca Bell

Jason Tinney

David Fearn
Lucca Colonna

Bob Chatham

Rhianna Swyer

Naomi Albans

Hays Safeguarding and Child Protection course

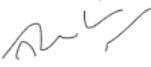
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This Policy is reviewed annually by the DSO and Board Members, and regularly viewed and discussed in Management meetings.

Review Date: 11th July 2024

Signed


Position
 Andrew Rawlinson - Chair

Last Reviewed

12/7/23 by Naomi Albans – trained staff names added, DSO Contact details added, Appendix 1 added (signs of abuse), reporting to the Charity Commission details added and board responsibilities added.

30/1/23 by Naomi Albans added training requirements and names of trained staff

3/11/22 by Naomi Albans and Caroline Pinney in line with MCC Guidance

31/10/22 by Naomi Albans – additions in line with MCC guidance

Appendix 1

Recognising the Signs of Abuse

(source: NSPCC website)

The signs of child abuse aren't always obvious, and a child might not feel able to tell anyone what's happening to them. Sometimes, children don't even realise that what's happening to them is abuse.

There are different types of child abuse and the signs that a child is being abused may depend on the type. Some common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a child's life include:

- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- Becoming withdrawn
- Seeming anxious
- Becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- Lacks social skills and has few friends, if any



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- Poor bond or relationship with parent/carer
- Knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- Running away or going missing
- Always choosing to wear clothes over their body

These signs don't necessarily mean that a child is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting their behaviour.

You may also notice some concerning behaviour from adults who you know have children in their care, which makes you concerned for the child/children's safety and wellbeing.

Below are more specific signs of different types of abuse.

Bullying

No single sign will indicate for certain that a child is being bullied, but watch out for:

- Belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- Physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises
- Being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- Not doing as well at school
- Asking for, or stealing, money (to give to whoever's bullying them)
- Being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- Problems with eating or sleeping
- Bullying others.

Sexual Abuse/Grooming

- Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Being frightened of some people, places or situations
- Being secretive
- Sharp changes in mood or character
- Having money or things they can't or won't explain
- Physical signs of abuse, like bruises or bleeding in their genital or anal area
- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy
- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Staying out late or overnight
- Having a new group of friends
- Missing from home or care, or stopping going to school or college
- Hanging out with older people, other vulnerable people or in antisocial groups
- Involved in a gang
- Involved in criminal activities like selling drugs or shoplifting

Child Trafficking

- Spending a lot of time doing household chores



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- Rarely leave their house or have no time for playing
- Orphaned or living apart from their family
- Live in low-standard accommodation
- Unsure which country, city or town they're in
- Can't or are reluctant to share personal information or where they live
- Not being registered with a school or a GP practice
- Have no access to their parents or guardians
- Being seen in inappropriate places like brothels or factories
- Have money or things you wouldn't expect them to
- Have injuries from workplace accidents
- Give a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children

Criminal Exploitation

- Frequently absent from and doing badly in school
- Going missing from home, staying out late and travelling for unexplained reasons
- In a relationship or hanging out with someone older than them
- Being angry, aggressive or violent
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Having unexplained money and buying new things
- Wearing clothes or accessories in gang colours or getting tattoos
- Using new slang words
- Spending more time on social media and being secretive about time online
- Making more calls or sending more texts, possibly on a new phone or phones
- Self-harming and feeling emotionally unwell
- Taking drugs and abusing alcohol
- Committing petty crimes like shop lifting or vandalism
- Unexplained injuries and refusing to seek medical help
- Carrying weapons or having a dangerous breed of dog.

Domestic Abuse

- Aggression or bullying
- Anti-social behaviour, like vandalism
- Anxiety, depression or suicidal thoughts
- Attention seeking
- Bed-wetting, nightmares or insomnia
- Constant or regular sickness, like colds, headaches and mouth ulcers
- drug or alcohol use
- Eating disorders
- Problems in school or trouble learning
- Tantrums
- Withdrawal

Emotional Abuse

As children grow up, their emotions change. This means it can be difficult to tell if they're being emotionally abused. But children who are being emotionally abused might:

- Seem unconfident or lack self-assurance



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- Struggle to control their emotions
- Have difficulty making or maintaining relationships
- At in a way that's inappropriate for their age.

The signs of emotional abuse can also be different for children at different ages.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Signs FGM might happen

- A relative or someone known as a 'cutter' visiting from abroad
- A special occasion or ceremony takes place where a girl 'becomes a woman' or is 'prepared for marriage'
- A female relative, like a mother, sister or aunt has undergone FGM
- A family arranges a long holiday overseas or visits a family abroad during the summer holidays
- A girl has an unexpected or long absence from school
- A girl struggles to keep up in school
- A girl runs away – or plans to run away - from home.

Signs FGM might have taken place

- Have difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- Spending longer in the bathroom or toilet
- Appearing quiet, anxious or depressed
- Acting differently after an absence from school or college
- Reluctance to go to the doctors or have routine medical examinations
- Asking for help – though they might not be explicit about the problem because they're scared or embarrassed.

Grooming

It can be difficult to tell if a child is being groomed – the signs aren't always obvious and may be hidden. Older children might behave in a way that seems to be "normal" teenage behaviour, masking underlying problems.

Some of the signs you might see include:

- Being very secretive about how they're spending their time, including when online
- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Having money or new things like clothes and mobile phones that they can't or won't explain
- Underage drinking or drug taking
- Spending more or less time online or on their devices
- Being upset, withdrawn or distressed



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- Sexualised behaviour, language or an understanding of sex that's not appropriate for their age
- Spending more time away from home or going missing for periods of time.

Neglect

Neglect can be really difficult to spot. Having one of the signs doesn't necessarily mean a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple signs that last for a while, they might show there's a serious problem. Children and young people who are neglected might have:

Change in Behaviour

- Becoming clingy
- Becoming aggressive
- Being withdrawn, depressed or anxious
- Changes in eating habits
- Displaying obsessive behaviour
- Finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities
- Missing school
- Showing signs of self harm
- Using drugs or alcohol

Poor appearance and hygiene

- Being smelly or dirty
- Being hungry or not given money for food
- Having unwashed clothes
- Having the wrong clothing, such as no warm clothes in winter
- Having frequent and untreated nappy rash in infants.

Health and development problems

- Anaemia
- Body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints
- Medical or dental issues
- Missed medical appointments, such as for vaccinations
- Not given the correct medicines
- Poor language or social skills
- Regular illness or infections
- Repeated accidental injuries, often caused by lack of supervision
- Skin issues, such as sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm
- Thin or swollen tummy
- Tiredness
- Untreated injuries
- Weight or growth issues.

Housing and family issues



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- Living in unsuitable home environment, such as having no heating
- Being left alone for. Along time
- Taking on the role of the carer for other family members

Online Abuse

A child or young person experiencing abuse online might:

- Spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media
- Seem distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting
- Be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- Have lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

Physical Abuse

Bumps and bruises don't always mean a child is being physically abused. All children have accidents, trips and falls. And there isn't just one sign or symptom to look out for. But it's important to be aware of the signs.

If a child regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries or the explanation doesn't match the injuries, then this should be reported.

Physical abuse symptoms include:

- Bruises
- Broken or fractured bones
- Burns or scalds
- Bite marks.

It can also include other injuries and health problems, such as:

- Scarring
- The effects of poisoning, such as vomiting, drowsiness or seizures
- Breathing problems from drowning, suffocation or poisoning.

Head injuries in babies and toddlers can be signs of abuse so it's important to be aware of these. Visible signs include:

- Swelling
- Bruising
- Fractures
- Being extremely sleepy or unconscious
- Breathing problems
- Seizures
- Vomiting
- Unusual behaviour, such as being irritable or not feeding properly.



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Sexual Abuse

Emotional and behavioural signs

- Avoiding being alone with or frightened of people or a person they know.
- Language or sexual behaviour you wouldn't expect them to know
- Having nightmares or bed-wetting
- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Self harm
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem
- Changes in their mood, feeling irritable and angry, or anything out of the ordinary.

Physical signs

- Bruises
- Bleeding, discharge, pains or soreness in their genital or anal area
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy

If a child is being or has been sexually abused online, they might:

- Spending a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media
- Seem distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting
- Being secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- Having lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.