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# Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult

# Safeguarding Policy

Equal Arts, a creative ageing charity based in Newcastle, has over 35 years of experience delivering creative opportunities to support the health and wellbeing of older people, living with long term health conditions or those who are most vulnerable. Equal Arts aims to foster a sense of community through working in partnership with schools and community organisations.

# Procedures for the protection of vulnerable adults, children and young people.

**Policy Statement**

**Equal Arts** is committed to a practice which protects children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm. This Policy details organisational behaviour and best practice. It is applicable to **Equal Arts** staff, committee members, volunteers and contractors working on a freelance basis.

For the purposes of this policy ‘Staff’ refers to any employed staff, committee members, volunteers and freelance contractors. A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

Vulnerable Beneficiaries are defined as children under the age of 18 or anyone over the age of 18 who requires activities which lead to them being considered vulnerable to significant harm or exploitation at that particular time.

A Vulnerable Beneficiary can be anyone:

* Who receives social care services or personal care
* Who requires assistance in relation to general household matters such as paying bills, shopping etc. due to a physical or sensory impairment, learning disability or mental health problem
* Who is detained by Her Majesty’s Government or in contact with probation services

Staff accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of issues, which could cause Vulnerable Beneficiaries harm.

We will safeguard children, young people and other vulnerable adults by:

 Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.  Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.

 Sharing information about concerns with relevant agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately and doing so in a swift and appropriate manner.  Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff, volunteers and any freelancers.

 Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

 This Policy will be made readily available to all staff and volunteers

 Reviewing our policy annually.

 The Policy has been agreed with the committee members of **Equal Arts**

This policy is accompanied by four appendixes.

Appendix A Incident Report Form

Appendix B Useful contacts

Appendix C Details definitions of abuse as found on the NSPCC website

Appendix D Image Consent Form

This policy must be read in conjunction with **Equal Arts** policies and governing documents.

**Role of the Designated Person for child protection**

The Designated Person is responsible for:

 Providing the ‘first port of call’ and offering advice and support to all staff regarding safeguarding and child protection issues.

 Establishing and maintaining a liaison role with the relevant social work department, family and psycho-social services departments, where necessary.

 Making referrals as necessary.

 Keeping up to date with changes and developments in safeguarding and child protection.

 Disseminating policy and good practice to all **Equal Arts** staff, in particular:

1. Ensuring that staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities for being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for safeguarding and child protection.

2. Ensuring that all staff have read/are aware of the specific **Equal Arts** Policies and Procedures.

3. Ensuring that new staff/volunteers receive induction about safeguarding and child protection procedures and existing staff receive training as required.

4. Organising information relating to safeguarding and child protection so that this is accessible to all staff and volunteers.

**Role of Parents**

Parents / persons with parental responsibility are ultimately responsible for their children’s welfare at all times, and they should be assured that **Equal Arts** is a credible organisation.

We achieve this by providing a full copy of the Safeguarding Policy on request.

**Codes of Behaviour - Statement of Intent**

It is the policy of **Equal Arts** to safeguard the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm.

**Equal Arts** is committed to creating a safe environment in which young people and vulnerable adults can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any of **Equal Arts** projects, training events, workshops or other activities. Personnel should, at all times, show respect and understanding of individual’s rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of **Equal Arts**

**Guidelines for all Equal Arts** **staff, board members and volunteers**:

 Staff and volunteers should be committed to treating children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect and dignity.

 Always listen to what a child, young person or vulnerable adult is saying.

 Value each child, young person and vulnerable adult.

 Recognise the unique contribution each individual can make.

 Encourage and praise each child, young person and vulnerable adult.

**Staff Conduct**

Staff, board members and volunteers should:

 Endeavour to provide an example which we would wish others to follow.

 Use appropriate language with children, young people and vulnerable adults and challenge any inappropriate language used by a young person or child or an adult working with young people.

 Respect a child’s, young person’s or vulnerable adult’s right to privacy.

 Always dress appropriately at all times.

 Be aware that someone might misinterpret actions no matter how well intentioned.

 Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts.

 Never allow themselves to enter into inappropriate situations, including tantrums or crushes.

 Never exaggerate or trivialise abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about or to a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

**Contact with children, young adults and vulnerable adults**

Staff and volunteers should:

 Should actively avoid spending any time alone with children or vulnerable beneficiaries and away from other people.

 In the unlikely event of having to meet with an individual child or vulnerable beneficiary this meeting must be as open as possible, and other **Equal Arts** staff members will be informed of the location and approximate length of the meeting. If no adult is available as company to the meeting, the young person will be encouraged to bring a friend.

**Physical Contact**

 Staff and volunteers should never engage in any type of physical contact with any young person or vulnerable beneficiary without first asking permission.

 **Equal Arts** will always require a responsible adult to accompany any vulnerable beneficiaries or groups of vulnerable beneficiaries.

 Staff and volunteers should never allow inappropriate touching of any kind.

**Online and Social Media Safety:**

 Where possible, all contact with children will be conducted via schools, youth agencies or relevant and responsible adults.

 **Equal Arts** staff will never contact a child, young person or vulnerable adult directly in regards to non-professional or personal matters.

 **Equal Arts** staff and volunteers will never issue or accept “friend requests” or equivalent from social networking sites from a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

 **Equal Arts** staff and volunteers will not take or share photos or video footage of children, young people or vulnerable adults without confirmation that the appropriate permissions have been sought and received.

 The relevant staff member for a given project is responsible for distributing and collating photo permission forms to schools and for discussing how best to document projects with the project partner and will circulate this information.

 Confidential data that is collected on participants including addresses, dietary needs, medical conditions etc. should be treated in confidence and with respect and should be shared between adults only on a need to know basis.

 When sharing information, **Equal Arts** will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility, of the people with whom they are sharing.

 All children and vulnerable adults have a right to know the information **Equal Arts** holds on them.

**Providing effective management for staff & volunteering through supervision, support & training**

It is imperative that each member of **Equal Arts** is aware of their responsibilities under the Child Protection legislation and has a working knowledge of procedures. Each member of staff will receive this Policy alongside the governing documents when they start work. Staff are required to read and understand the Safeguarding policy.

**Guidelines on Recruitment**

All reasonable steps are taken by **Equal Arts** to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with young people and vulnerable adults. The same recruitment procedure will be adopted whether the company members are paid or unpaid, full, part-time or freelance.

**Recruitment Procedure**

This process will be adhered to for any role at **Equal Arts** that directly relates to working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

 Advertisements for roles that involve work with children, young people and vulnerable adults will state that applicants will be expected to have a current DBS check. In most circumstances, freelance contractors (predominantly artists) will have obtained their own check, which should have taken place within the last 3 years. In particular circumstances **Equal Arts** may arrange this. They may not work with children, young people or vulnerable adults until a clean check is received.

 All applicants must submit a CV or application form detailing their experience relevant to the role.

 Successful applicants, including volunteers, will be interviewed to assess suitability for the role.

 Two references should be taken up before appointing.

**On Appointment**

 An enhanced DBS check must be held by all **Equal Arts** staff and volunteers who will be working directly with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

 The DBS check must be cleared before work commences. If this is not possible, the individual must always be accompanied by a DBS checked adult in carrying out their duties in working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

 Individuals who have a valid DBS check in place on appointment should have had their DBS check issued within the last 2 years and must present a copy of their DBS to the Designated Person for Child Protection for verification.

**Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks**

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) exists to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children, young people and vulnerable adults. A DBS check forms one part of the wider safeguarding process. It helps organizations’ to determine whether a person is a suitable candidate for a particular role by providing information about their criminal history.

**Hearing a Disclosure**

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult says or indicates that he or she is being abused, or information is obtained which gives concern that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is being abused, **Equal Arts** will follow the guidance below:

RECEIVE:

 Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.

 Accept what is said and react calmly so as not to frighten the child, young person or vulnerable adult.

 Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable using the Incident Report Form if possible.

**When capturing information use the TED (Tell, Explain and Describe) technique.  This technique informs the Equal Arts report template.**

REASSURE:

 Reassure the child, young person or vulnerable adult, but only so far as is honest and reliable.

 Tell the child, young person, vulnerable adult that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell; I am glad you came to me.

 It is important that you do not promise to keep it a secret as your professional responsibilities may require you to report the matter. If you make this promise to a child, young person or vulnerable adult and then break it, you confirm to the child, young person or vulnerable adult yet again that people are not to be trusted.

Explain that you will let the status of their enquiry or complaint and inform the person of the course of action taken.

REACT:

 React to the child, young person or vulnerable adult only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details.  Take what the child, young person or vulnerable adult says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child, young person or vulnerable adult who has a speech disability and/or differences in language.

 Do not ask ‘leading’ questions. Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and that of the child, young person or vulnerable adult) in any later prosecution in court.

 Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to.

RECORD:

 Make some brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand.

 Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court.

 Record the date, time, place, persons present and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour.  Be specific when noting the words used by the child, young person or vulnerable adult.

Where possible, record information on Equal Art’s Tell, Explain and Describe TED form

REMEMBER:

 Concerns will be shared with the Designated Person who may take this matter forward.

**Procedure for reporting allegations or suspicions of abuse**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working at **Equal Arts** to decide whether or not a child, young person or vulnerable person is being abused or might be abused. However, there is a responsibility to act on concerns to protect them in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child/person.

If you become aware of any issue or complaint relating to the welfare or wellbeing of children, young people or vulnerable adult, then you should raise these with the Designated Person who will be responsible for documenting your concern on an Incident Report Form. All concerns will be considered, and a decision reached as to whether the concern should be referred to Social Services.

**Details on the TED form will include:**

 Name of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary

 Date of Birth of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary (if available)

 Approximate Age of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary if Date of Birth is not available

 Name of staff member completing the form

 Date the incident took place

 Time the incident took place

 Location the incident took place

 Names of others involved, or others who witnessed the incident

 Details of the incident as a statement of fact

 Action Taken

 Were the parents informed? If appropriate.

The record will then be signed by the completing person and the Designated Person.

**Making a Referral to Social Services**

If a decision is made to raise a concern with Social Services, it will be the responsibility of the Designated Person to formally report this concern. If, for any reason, the Designated Person is unable to lead on this process then the Deputy Designated Person will lead.

The Safeguarding Lead, with advice from the appropriate Board Member will raise the issue through Section 42.  [Decision-making: Section 42 Safeguarding Adults Enquiries One day workshop 28th and 29th November 2018 (local.gov.uk)](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/S42%20collated%20slides%20MC%20final%20version%20for%2028%20Nov%202018.pdf)

This is an online enquiry form, found on all Local Authority Safeguarding information. For Newcastle it is:   [MyCare - Newcastle (mycarenewcastle.org.uk)](https://mycarenewcastle.org.uk/form/SAIE?latest=true" \l "!/) or Gateshead:  [Tell us about a safeguarding concern - Gateshead Council](https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/10277/Safeguarding-concern)

Referrals should be made to:

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

**Equal Arts** will make all referrals within 24 hours of a serious concern or disclosure coming to light. When a referral is made, **Equal Arts** will record the name and role of the children and young people’s services member of staff or police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call/referral.

If a concern is allayed and a decision is made not to make a referral then **Equal Arts** still be required to record details of the concern and details as to why a referral was not made. This information may become relevant later on if further concerns emerge.

**Responding to concerns made by a child of suspected abuse**

Responding to concerns about the conduct of a member of staff or volunteer

In the event of allegations being made against an employee (staff or voluntary), **Equal Arts** has a dual responsibility in respect of both the child, young person, vulnerable adult and staff member. The same person must not have responsibility for dealing with the welfare issues about children and young people and the staff employment issues. Two separate procedures must be followed:

1. In respect of the child, young person or vulnerable adult the Designated Person will lead the process related to the child, young person or vulnerable adult and will follow the procedure outlined above.

2. In respect of the staff member against whom the allegation is made the Deputy Designated person will lead the process related to the staff member and will follow the procedure below.

It is a legal requirement that the incident is reported to the Local Authority Designated officer.

**Name of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Lead:**

**Nicola Kendall, Training Development Manager**

**Email:** **nicola@equalarts.org.uk**

**Deputy child protection lead(s) Name:**

**Kerry Wood, Operations and Communication Lead**

**Email:** **kerry@equalarts.org.uk**

**Name of Trustee/board member responsible for Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding:**

**Anne Walton**

**Email:** **anne.annewalton.walton@gmail.com**

Date when Policy was last reviewed by the board of trustees: November 2024

*Date when Policy will be next reviewed: May 2025*

**APPENDIX A – Incident Report Form/TED Form**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary  Date of Birth/ Approximate Age |  |
| Name and role of staff member completing form  |  |
| Date the incident took place:  Approximate Time: |  |
| Where did the incident take place? |  |
| Who else was involved/witnessed the incident |  |
| Details: TELL, EXPLAIN, DESCRIBEPlease provide a statement of fact and record the exact wording. |  |
| Action taken and external agencies contacted |  |
| Parents/relatives informed? |  |
| Signature of staff member reporting incident |  |
| Signature of Designated Person |  |
| Date |  |

**APPENDIX B - Useful Contacts**

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Helpline

01325 953795 01752 346984

Available 5pm to 8.30am

Monday to Friday and all-day Saturday and Sunday

The NSPCC (National Centre)

42 Curtain Road London, EC2A 3NH

0808 800 5000

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

[Safeguarding Adults - Newcastle Safeguarding](https://www.newcastlesafeguarding.org.uk/safeguarding-adults/)

[Safeguarding adults - Gateshead Council](https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/28347/Safeguarding)

[Northumberland County Council - Adults safeguarding](https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Care/safeguarding.aspx)

[Concerned about someone - report neglect or abuse - Durham County Council](https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/5680/Concerned-about-someone-report-neglect-or-abuse)

**APPENDIX C - What is abuse?**

The following definitions have been taken from the NSPCC website, Feb 2017.

**Child Abuse**

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. We know that neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse.

An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event. And it can increasingly happen online.

**Domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. But it isn’t just physical violence – domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse. Abusive behaviour can occur in any relationship. It can continue even after the relationship has ended. Both men and women can be abused or abusers.

Domestic abuse can seriously harm children and young people. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships. It's often difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening, because it usually takes place in the family home and abusers can act very differently when other people are around.

Children who witness domestic abuse may:

 become aggressive

 display anti-social behaviour

 suffer from depression or anxiety

 not do as well at school - due to difficulties at home or disruption of moving to and from refuges.

**Sexual abuse**

A child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This doesn't have to be physical contact and it can happen online. Sometimes the child won't understand that what's happening to them is abuse. They may not even understand that it's wrong.

Contact abuse involves touching activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a child, including penetration.

It includes:

 sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child's wearing clothes or not

 rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus

 forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity

 making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities, such as grooming, exploitation, persuading children to perform sexual acts over the internet and flashing.

It includes:

 encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts

 not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others

 meeting a child following sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them

 online abuse including making, viewing or distributing child abuse images

 allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images

 showing pornography to a child

 sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child exploitation).

**Neglect**

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and is the most common form of child abuse. A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care. A child may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm. They may not get the love, care and attention they need from their parents. A child who's neglected will often suffer from other abuse as well. Neglect is dangerous and can cause serious, long-term damage - even death.

Physical neglect is failing to provide for a child’s basic needs such as food, clothing or shelter. Failing to adequately supervise a child or provide for their safety.

Educational neglect is failing to ensure a child receives an education.

Emotional neglect is failing to meet a child’s needs for nurture and stimulation, perhaps by ignoring, humiliating, intimidating or isolating them. It’s often the most difficult to prove.

Medical neglect is failing to provide appropriate health care, including dental care and refusal of care or ignoring medical recommendations.

**Online abuse**

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse.

Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online). Children can feel like there is no escape from online abuse – abusers can contact them at any time of the day or night, the abuse can come into safe places like their bedrooms, and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people.

**Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is deliberately hurting a child causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts. It isn’t accidental - children who are physically abused suffer violence such as being hit, kicked, poisoned, burned, slapped or having objects thrown at them. Shaking or hitting babies can cause non-accidental head injuries (NAHI). Sometimes parents or carers will make up or cause the symptoms of illness in their child, perhaps giving them medicine they don’t need and making the child unwell – this is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII).

There’s no excuse for physically abusing a child. It causes serious, and often long-lasting, harm – and in severe cases, death.

**Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment or emotional neglect of a child. It’s sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a child’s emotional health and development.

Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare or humiliate a child or isolating or ignoring them.

Children who are emotionally abused are usually suffering another type of abuse or neglect at the same time – but this isn’t always the case.

Emotional abuse includes:

 humiliating or constantly criticising a child

 threatening, shouting at a child or calling them names

 making the child the subject of jokes, or using sarcasm to hurt a child

 blaming, scapegoating

 making a child perform degrading acts

 not recognising a child's own individuality, trying to control their lives

 pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations

 exposing a child to distressing events or interactions such as domestic abuse or drug taking

 failing to promote a child's social development

 not allowing them to have friends

 persistently ignoring them

 being absent

 manipulating a child

 never saying anything kind, expressing positive feelings or congratulating a child on successes

 never showing any emotions in interactions with a child, also known as emotional neglect.

**Child sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them.

 Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online.

 Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

**Appendix D**

**Image Consent Form**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Participant Name  |  |
| Parent / Guardian Name  |  |
| Name of Photographer/film maker  |  |
| Date of Photography/film making  |  |
| Venue  |  |
| I hereby give permission to use any still and/or moving image being video footage, photographs and/or frames and/or audio footage depicting the participant and taken by the photographer named above for any of the following uses: Advertisements, marketing, leaflets, website or any other use such as for training, educational or publicity purposes. The above consents will apply throughout the world and be for an indefinite periodwill expire on:  |
| Signed Date  |  |
| Organisation/School Name (if applicable) Address/postcode |  |