

SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

For Starling Arts Community Interest Company

UPDATED: 9th June 2023



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This document outlines Starling Arts Community Interest Company's policy and procedures for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. Throughout this policy, Starling Arts Community Interest Company will be referred to as Starling Arts.

INTRODUCTION

Starling Arts makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe.

Starling Arts staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - come into contact with children, young people and / or vulnerable adults through the following activities:

- Community singing and arts projects including children, young people and/or vulnerable adults
- One-off schools workshops, such as those delivered for Wicked Active Learning
- Workshops or performances with vulnerable adults in hospitals, care homes and community settings
- Through membership of any vulnerable adult(s) in the Starling Voices, our community choirs

N.B Sometimes these activities may may take place online, via Zoom

The types of contact that staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - have with children, young people and / or vulnerable adults will be:

Regulated activities:

- Running workshops and/or rehearsals
- Teaching dance/drama/singing
- Backstage at performances including hair, make-up, costumes, chaperoning
- Front of House activities, including selling programmes and merchandise, taking tickets, etc
- Arts activities
- Other pastoral care during breaks or downtime in sessions

Other points of contact:

Social media including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Emails

This policy seeks to ensure that Starling Arts undertakes its responsibilities with regard to the protection of children, young people and / or vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns appropriately.

The policy establishes a framework to support salaried, freelance and volunteer staff in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations.

CONFIRMATION OF READING

I confirm that I have been made fully aware of, and understand the contents of, the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for Starling Arts.

Please complete the details below and return this completed form to Emily Garsin and Anna Shields by email to info@starlingarts.com where it will be stored securely.

Name:

Signature:

Date:



LEGISLATION

The principal pieces of legislation governing this policy are:

- The Children Act 1989 (as amended).
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.

Other legislation includes:

- GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners 2018.
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (guidance document) 2018.
- Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.
- Childcare Act 2006 (as amended in 2018).

DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children, young people and / or vulnerable adults wherever possible. In contrast, child and adult protection is about responding to circumstances that arise.

Abuse is a selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture.

It can take a number of forms, including the following:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying
- Neglect
- Financial (or material) abuse

Definition of a Child

A child is under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations convention on the Rights of a Child).

Definition of a Vulnerable Adult

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may include a person who:

- Is elderly and frail
- Has a mental illness, including dementia
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is a substance misuser
- Is homeless
- Does not have the capacity to make decisions
- Is in need of care, assistance and support

RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - have a responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.

We expect all staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

Additional specific responsibilities

Senior Management Team (Starling Arts' co-directors) have responsibility to ensure:

- The policy is in place and appropriate
- The policy is accessible
- The policy is implemented
- The policy is monitored and reviewed
- Sufficient resources (time and money) are allocated to ensure that the policy can be effectively implemented
- Promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- Ensure staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - have access to appropriate training/information
- Receive staff concerns about safeguarding and respond to all seriously, swiftly and appropriately
- Keep up to date with local arrangements for safeguarding and DBS
- Develop and maintain effective links with relevant agencies

IMPLEMENTATION STAGES

The scope of this Safeguarding Policy is broad ranging and in practice, it will be implemented via a range of policies and procedures within the organisation.

These include:

- Whistleblowing – ability to inform on other staff/ practices within the organisation
- Grievance and disciplinary procedures – to address breaches of procedures/ policies
- Health & Safety and project specific risk assessments
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy – ensuring safeguarding procedures are in line with this policy, in particular around discriminatory abuse and ensuring that the safeguarding policy and procedures are not discriminatory
- Data protection (how records are stored and access to those records)
- Confidentiality (or limited confidentiality) ensuring that service users are aware of your duty to disclose
- Staff induction
- Staff training

Safe recruitment

All staff - freelance, salaried or volunteer - who, as part of their work with Starling Arts, will have contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults must undergo an Enhanced DBS Check. The relevant check (Child or Adult workforce) will be stipulated by the work they carry out.

It is a criminal offence for individuals barred by the DBS to work or apply to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults in a wide range of posts. If a disclosure reveals that a staff member or applicant is not suitable to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, they will not be appointed by Starling Arts.

If a potential applicant's DBS check reveals that they are barred, Starling Arts may inform the DBS, police and/or other relevant agencies of that person's attempt to seek employment with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.

Starling Arts will cover the cost of DBS checks for all salaried staff. Freelance staff and volunteers must provide their own.

COMMUNICATION, TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR STAFF

Starling Arts commits resources for induction, training of staff (salaried, freelance or volunteer), effective communications and support mechanisms in relation to Safeguarding

Induction will include:

Typical ways to include safeguarding issues during induction include:

- Discussion of the Safeguarding Policy (and confirmation of understanding)
- Discussion of other relevant policies
- Ensure familiarity with reporting processes
- Initial briefing on safeguarding including: safe working practices, understanding child protection and the alerter guide for adult safeguarding

Training

All staff who, through their role, are in contact with children, young people and / or vulnerable adults will be required to have undergone safeguarding training at an appropriate level.

Communications and discussion of safeguarding issues

Commitment to the following communication methods will ensure effective communication of safeguarding issues and practice:

- Team meetings
- SMT meetings
- One to one meetings (formal or informal)

Support

We recognise that involvement in situations where there is risk or actual harm can be stressful for staff concerned. The mechanisms in place to support staff include:

- Debriefing support for salaried, freelance or volunteer staff so that they can reflect on the issues they have dealt with.
- Staff who have initiated protection concerns will be contacted by the SMT within 1 week.

If something doesn't feel right, Starling Arts staff should mention it. Raising a concern, even if it turns out to be nothing, is part of our safeguarding practice. All staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - should maintain professional boundaries to protect themselves and Starling Arts project participants.

- Staff should not disclose their personal contact details to children, young people and/or vulnerable adults they work with
- Should not make contact with participants outside of sessions
- Should consider what they are sharing on social media and whether their channels can be easily accessed
- Avoid 1:1 situations with participants

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Professional boundaries are what define the limits of a relationship between a support worker and a client. They are a set of standards we agree to uphold that allows this necessary and often close relationship to exist while ensuring the correct detachment is kept in place.

Starling Arts expects all staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - to protect the professional integrity of themselves and the organisation.

The following professional boundaries must be adhered to:

Giving and receiving gifts from clients.

Starling Arts does not allow salaried, freelance or volunteer staff to give gifts to or receive gifts from clients. However gifts may be provided by the organisation as part of a planned activity.

Staff contact with user groups.

Personal relationships between Starling Arts staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - and a Starling Arts project member/participant who is a child, young person and/or vulnerable adult and a current service user is prohibited. This includes relationships through social networking sites such as Facebook or Instagram.

The following behaviours are prohibited:

- Use of abusive language
- Use of punishment or chastisement
- Passing on service users' personal contact details
- Degree of accessibility to service users (e.g. not providing personal contact details)
- Taking family members to a client's home
- Selling to or buying items from a service user
- Accepting responsibility for any valuables on behalf of a client
- Accepting money as a gift/ borrowing money from or lending money to service users
- Personal relationships with a third party related to or known to service users
- Accepting gifts / rewards or hospitality from the organisation as an inducement for either doing / not doing something in their official capacity

A professional and measured reaction is expected in response to inappropriate behaviour / language used by a client.

If the professional boundaries and/or policies are breached this could result in disciplinary procedures or enactment of the allegation management procedures.

REPORTING

The process outlined below details the stages involved in raising and reporting safeguarding concerns at Starling Arts.

When working with an organised group or school (including sessions delivered for Wicked Active Learning), a representative from that group or school maintains responsibility for reporting and managing any disclosures and safeguarding concerns to their appropriate body/bodies, should they be made by participants during a session. Despite this, if Starling Arts staff members are aware of a disclosure or safeguarding issue during the workshop, they should also report it to the Starling Arts directors immediately.

In all other cases when the workshop, event or performance is produced by Starling Arts, the process for reporting is as follows:

1. Communicate your concerns with the Starling Arts directors
2. Seek medical attention for the child or vulnerable adult, if needed
3. Discuss with parents of the child or with the vulnerable person or their carer, if appropriate
4. Obtain permission to make a referral if safe and appropriate
5. If needed, seek advice from an independent body
6. Complete a Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Incident Report Form if required and submit it to the local authority within 24 hours of making a contact
7. Ensure that feedback from the Local Authority is received and their response recorded
8. N.B. If the immediate manager / director is implicated, then refer to their line manager or peer

ALLEGATIONS MANAGEMENT

Starling Arts recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against its staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - within the organisation or by a professional from another organisation.

The process for raising and dealing with allegations is as follows:

- Any member of staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - from Starling Arts is required to report any concerns in the first instance to their line manager/ safeguarding manager/ peer.
- A written record of the concern will be completed by SMT
- Contact local authority for advice
- Follow the advice provided
- Starling Arts recognises its legal duty to report any concerns about unsafe practice by any of its staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - to the relevant bodies / authorities.

MONITORING

The organisation will monitor the following Safeguarding aspects:

- Safe recruitment practices
- DBS checks undertaken
- References applied for new salaried staff
- Records made and kept of supervision sessions
- Training – register/record of staff training on child and vulnerable adult protection
- Monitoring whether concerns are being reported and actioned
- Checking that policies are up to date and relevant
- Reviewing the current reporting procedure in place
- Presence and action of Designated Senior Manager responsible for Safeguarding is in post

MANAGING INFORMATION

Information will be gathered, recorded and stored in accordance with the following policies:

- [Privacy Policy](#)

All staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - must be aware that they have a professional duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. The public interest in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults may override confidentiality interests. However, information will be shared on a need to know basis only, as judged by the Designated Senior Manager.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise service users or their families/ carers that they will keep secrets.

COMMUNICATING AND REVIEWING THE POLICY

Starling Arts will make clients aware of the Safeguarding Policy through the following means:

- A statement to customers about safeguarding arrangements will be produced and displayed on the website during times of service (e.g. before a project involving young people).
- An agreement with each client or a pack produced for clients will explain the safeguarding arrangements during times of service.
- The Complaints Policy/Procedure could be referred to which outlines how clients can make complaints about the service.

Last updated: June 2023

APPENDIX 1

Signs and Symptoms of Abuse and Neglect

(Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2016))

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which 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: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a 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 (including cyberbullying), 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, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect: 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 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, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

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