



Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy

Updated: February 2019

Named Person: Hannah Thompson

Deputy Named Person: Rose Kent

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Accessible Arts & Media recognises the importance of its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults attending workshops, courses, rehearsals and performances. This policy has been written in accordance with the [West and North Yorkshire and York Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures](#).
- 1.2 As part of its mission, Accessible Arts & Media is committed to:
- 1.2.1 Ensuring that the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount at all times.
 - 1.2.2 Valuing, listening to and respecting children, young people and vulnerable adults as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
 - 1.2.3 Recognising that children and vulnerable adults with a communication and/or cognitive disability are more vulnerable to abuse.
 - 1.2.4 Ensuring that all individuals, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
 - 1.2.5 Ensuring safe recruitment, supervision and training for all staff and volunteers
 - 1.2.6 Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse to ensure that all suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
 - 1.2.7 We are committed to creating a safe environment for children, young people, vulnerable adults, staff and volunteers.

NB For the purposes of this policy, the Named Person is Hannah Thompson, who will be the designated officer for child and vulnerable person protection. In Hannah's absence, the Deputy Named Person is Rose Kent.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 Accessible Arts & Media recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. It also acknowledges that they can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. Accessible Arts & Media will ensure the safety and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in its activities through adherence to this policy. Accessible Arts and Media ensures a commitment to a zero tolerance of abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults. This policy applies to all staff including senior managers, trustees, paid staff and volunteers.

3. Safe practice requirements

- 3.1 All personnel should demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults; and to reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.
- 3.2 **Planning a project** for work involving children, young people and vulnerable adults means: -
- 3.2.1 Undertaking, at the outset of project planning, a risk assessment, and monitoring risk throughout the project;
 - 3.2.2 Identifying, at the outset, the people with designated protection responsibility.
 - 3.2.3 Engaging in effective recruitment, including appropriate vetting of staff and volunteers;
 - 3.2.4 Knowing how to get in touch with and report concerns to local authority, social services and other agencies;
 - 3.2.5 Putting systems in place to create and manage good relationships with parents and other stakeholders;
 - 3.2.6 Being aware of the content of your AAMs work and the impact it may have on children, young people or vulnerable adults.
 - 3.2.7 Ensuring all staff and volunteers are aware of their ongoing responsibilities for the children and vulnerable adults who participate in AAM projects.
- 3.3 Safe practice in a **physical environment** where there is contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults means: -
- 3.3.1 Working in an open environment;
 - 3.3.2 Assessing and monitoring risks throughout the project.
- 3.4 Safe **physical contact** with all service users especially those **with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities** means: -
- 3.4.1 Seeking agreement of participants prior to any physical contact: including a discussion with the support worker/ carer about the best approach, in relation to our Total Communication practice. Using eye contact and a range of communication methods to ensure the best possible understanding and agreement/engagement from service user.
 - 3.4.2 Making sure disabled participants are informed of and comfortable with any necessary physical contact.
 - 3.4.3 Only touching participants when it is in relation to the particular arts activity to ensure they can participate fully.
 - 3.4.4 Otherwise maintaining a safe and appropriate distance from participants;

3.5 Safe practice in **managing sensitive information** means:

- 3.5.1 Adherence to the Data Protection Policy and procedures for taking, using and storing photographs or images of children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- 3.5.2 Careful monitoring and use of web-based materials and activities;
- 3.5.3 Agreed procedures for reporting any suspicions or allegations of abuse;
- 3.5.4 Ensuring confidentiality in order to protect the rights of employees, freelancers and volunteers, including safe handling, storage and disposal of any information provided on artists or arts facilitators (or others involved in arts projects) as part of the recruitment process (Data Protection Act 1998).

3.6 Safe practice in **professional development** means: -

- 3.6.1 Keeping up to date with health and safety in artistic practice;
- 3.6.2 Being informed about legislation and policies for protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- 3.6.3 Undertaking relevant development and training;
- 3.6.4 Intergrating at local level with the children and vulnerable adults safeguarding boards and all relevant training and development.

4. Appointment, Support, supervision & training of leaders & workers

4.1 Accessible Arts & Media recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children, young people or vulnerable adults in some way, and will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with these vulnerable groups as well as ensuring the appropriate levels of supervision of all staff and volunteers.

4.2

4.2.1 Accessible Arts & Media will ensure that all staff and volunteers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with legal requirements via the Disclosure and Barring Service. An enhanced criminal records check and full check against the barred lists (child or vulnerable adult or both, dependent on the staff/volunteer role) is required for anyone in Regulated Activity.

4.2.2 For working with children Regulated Activity includes any unsupervised training, teaching, caring for or supervising children OR being the person supervising others in delivering Regulated Activity. To qualify as Regulated Activity it must be carried out frequently, which means: carried out by the same person once a week, (or more often), in a 30-day period or overnight. Additionally Regulated Activity includes undertaking personal care, which is described as using physical help in connection with eating, drinking, toileting, washing and dressing.

4.2.3 For vulnerable adults, Regulated Activity means undertaking personal care which is described as using physical help which involves hands-on physical assistance with washing, dressing, eating, drinking, or assisting with an adult's cash, because of their age, illness or disability.

- 4.3 Staff, support workers and volunteers will be asked to sign that they have read and agreed to comply with this policy.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1 Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.
- 5.2 Information will be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

6 Types of Abuse and their Symptoms

Abuse can be categorised into distinct types:

1. **Physical Abuse:**
2. **Sexual Abuse:**
3. **Emotional Abuse:**
4. **Physical Neglect:**
5. **Abuse of a Position on Trust**
6. **Financial Abuse**
7. **CSE or Child Sexual Exploitation**

6.1 Physical Abuse:

This involves physical injury to a child, young person or vulnerable adult, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or a reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Typical signs of Physical Abuse are:

- **Bruises and abrasions** – especially about the face, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not be expected to occur given the age of the child. Some types of bruising are particularly characteristic of non-accidental injury especially when the child's/vulnerable adult's explanation does not match the nature of injury or when it appears frequently.
- **Slap marks** – these may be visible on cheeks or buttocks.
- **Twin bruises on either side of the mouth or cheeks** – can be caused by pinching or grabbing, sometimes to make a child/vulnerable adult eat or stop them from speaking.
- **Bruising on both sides of the ear** – this is often caused by grabbing a child/vulnerable adult that is attempting to run away. It is very painful to be held by the ear, as well as humiliating and this is a common injury.

- **Grip marks on arms or trunk** – gripping bruises on arm or trunk can be associated with shaking a child/vulnerable adult. Shaking can cause one of the most serious injuries to a child; i.e. a brain haemorrhage as the brain hits the inside of the skull. X-rays and other tests are required to fully diagnose the effects of shaking. Grip marks can also be indicative of sexual abuse.
- **Black eyes** – are mostly commonly caused by an object such as a fist coming into contact with the eye socket. **NB.** A heavy bang on the nose, however, can cause bruising to spread around the eye but a doctor will be able to tell if this has occurred.
- **Damage to the mouth** – e.g. bruised/cut lips or torn skin where the upper lip joins the mouth.
- **Bite marks**
- **Fractures**
- **Poisoning or other misuse of drugs** – e.g. overuse of sedatives.
- **Burns and/or scalds** – a round, red burn on tender, non-protruding parts like the mouth, inside arms and on the genitals will almost certainly have been deliberately inflicted. Any burns that appear to be cigarette burns should be cause for concern. Some types of scalds known as ‘dipping scalds’ are always cause for concern. An experienced person will notice skin splashes caused when a child accidentally knocks over a hot cup of tea. In contrast a child who has been deliberately ‘dipped’ in a hot bath will not have splash marks.

6.2 Sexual Abuse

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children, vulnerable adults and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles. Sexual abuse of children includes both contact sexual activity and exposing children to pornographic images. Grooming of a child under 18 is a criminal offence even if no contact sexual activity takes place (see also Abuse of Position of Trust below.)

Typical signs of Sexual Abuse are:

- **A detailed sexual knowledge inappropriate to the subject’s age**
- **Behaviour that is excessively affectionate or sexual towards other children or adults.**
- Attempts to inform by making a disclosure about the sexual abuse often begin by the initial sharing of limited information with an adult. **It is very characteristic of victims of sexual abuse to have an excessive pre-occupation with secrecy** and try to bind the adults to secrecy or confidentiality.
- **A fear of medical examinations.**
- **A fear of being alone** – this applies to friends/family/neighbours/baby-sitters, etc
- **A sudden loss of appetite, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa.**
- **Excessive masturbation is especially worrying when** it takes place in public.
- **Promiscuity**
- **Sexual approaches or assaults** – on other children or adults.
- The drawing of **pornographic or sexually explicit images.**

6.3 Emotional Abuse

The severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child/vulnerable adult, caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment – this category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

6.4 Physical Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child/vulnerable adult (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation), which results in serious impairment of the child's/vulnerable adult's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive. Persistent stomach aches, feeling unwell, and apparent anorexia can be associated with Physical neglect.

Typical signs of Physical Neglect are:

- **Underweight** – a child/vulnerable adult may be frequently hungry or pre-occupied with food or in the habit of stealing food or with the intention of procuring food. There is particular cause for concern where a persistently underweight child/vulnerable adult gains weight when away from home, for example, when in hospital or on a school trip. Some children also lose weight or fail to gain weight during school holiday when school lunches are not available and this is a cause for concern.
- **Inadequately clad** – a distinction needs to be made between situations where children are inadequately clad, dirty or smelly because they come from homes where neatness and cleanliness are unimportant and those where the lack of care is preventing the child from thriving.

Physical Neglect is a difficult category because it involves the making of a judgement about the seriousness of the degree of neglect. Much parenting falls short of the ideal but it may be appropriate to invoke child protection procedure in the case of neglect where the child's development is being adversely affected.

6.5 Abuse of a Position of Trust may take place where a staff member or volunteer engages or attempts to engage a young person or vulnerable adult in a sexual relationship. In the case of a young person of 16 or 17, this is still a criminal offence even when the child is legally able to consent. Grooming of children under 18 is a criminal offence even if no sexual conduct takes place, but if it can be shown to have been intended.

Sharing of personal mobile numbers or social media contacts must not happen between staff and participants as it can open the way to Abuse of Position of Trust, or lead to accusations thereof.

A level of distance in social contact needs to be maintained with project participants, although AAM recognises that this can be difficult when working learning disabled adults, living with a degree of independence. We expect staff to seek guidance from AAM's director or chair of trustees if they are unsure where or how to draw the line.

6.6 Financial Abuse: Taking money, goods or property without permission. This can include theft, fraud, exploitation or putting pressure on someone to make a will, transfer the ownership of property or carry out other financial transactions.

6.7 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. See Appendix 2 for more information and guidance.

7 Monitoring and Reviewing of Policy

7.1 The policy will be reviewed bi-annually and updated in response to changes in relevant legislation and good practice or in response to an identified failing in its effectiveness.

Date approved: 22nd February 2019

Next review date: February 2020

Signed by: *L. Corke*

Print Name: *LYNDA CORKE*

Position: *Trustee*