



Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

The purpose and scope of this policy

Feb 2025

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect children and young people who receive Arts 2 Heal's services. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- to provide parents, staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Arts 2 Heal, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer Team is: - Banu Adam

Banu Adam 06-02-25

Raising concerns, making disclosures and/or reporting safeguarding matters should be sent to:

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1. Introduction to the Policy

Arts 2 Heal is committed to ensure the safety and protection of all young people through the operation of our Safeguarding & Child Protection policy standards set out within this document. Arts 2 Heal is committed to the belief that all young people have a right to protection and the needs of disabled young people and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be considered.

Arts 2 Heal has a duty of care to safeguard directly from harm all young people involved in any activity that we deliver or are associated with.

Arts 2 Heal also has the responsibility to ensure that, within all the activities we deliver, any partner organisations must also have established policies and provide protection to young people.

Arts 2 Heal is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone in the organisation, whether they are paid staff or volunteers, accepts their responsibilities to safeguard young people from harm and abuse. This means to follow procedures to protect young people and report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, providing young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst engaging with Arts 2 Heal and to allow all staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

As a result of this commitment, the policy was written and published in June 2018 to ensure that it continues to meet current Safeguarding and Child Protection policies; and it is now aligned to the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2015) guidelines and Protection of Freedom Act (2012).

Definitions

A child/young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 (Children's Act 1989).

Within this policy, any person under the age of 18 will be classed as a young person or people.

Safeguarding is defined as protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health and/or development, ensuring that children grow up in the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy forms part of a suite of documents and policies which relate to the safeguarding responsibilities of Arts 2 Heal.

In particular this policy should be read in conjunction with the Safer Recruitment Policy and other organisational policies referenced throughout the document.

1.1 Policy Statement

The work of Arts 2 Heal is varied and diverse and involves working with multiple partner and supplier third parties, therefore all staff and volunteers should be clear that third parties or other settings' policies and procedures should be adhered to at all times where relevant. When working in other settings the "host" organisation's Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures may supersede the Arts 2 Heal Safeguarding and Child Protection policy in the event of a procedural dispute. It is vital that Arts 2 Heal staff and volunteers seek clarity and agreement(written where relevant) on such matters in all relevant cases.

1.1.1 Arts 2 Heal is committed to the following:

- That the welfare of the young person is paramount.
- All young people, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity, should be able to participate in any Arts 2 Heal activity in a safe environment.
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect young people from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
- That all concerns, suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- That all Arts 2 Heal staff and volunteers, including self-employed contractors or partner employees or volunteers who work with young people, will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility and will be provided with guidance and training in good practice and child protection procedures where it is deemed relevant and appropriate.
- That young people should be listened to as well as given opportunities to assist in the development of safeguarding and child protection good practice and;
- To work in partnership with Parents and Carers and young people to safeguard and protect all young people.

1.2 Communication of the Policy

1.2.1 To ensure the successful implementation of this policy it is essential that we at Arts 2 Heal communicate to our entire staff, volunteers, partners, young people and their parents and carers our commitment to safeguarding young people.

In addition, access to the Policy is available to all staff, volunteers, partners, parents and carers, participants and the general public at large via the Arts 2 Heal website. This ensures people have access to this information and are able to understand both how the policy will be implemented and the process they should follow should an issue arise.

1.3 Monitoring and Review

1.3.1 The implementation of procedures will be regularly monitored and reviewed. The Designated Safeguarding Officer's Team at Arts 2 Heal will regularly report progress, challenges, difficulties, achievements, gaps and areas where changes are required to the management committee.

The policy will be reviewed every two years or whenever there is a major change in the organisation or in relevant legislation and/or good practice guidelines,

2. Promoting Good Practice

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 To provide young people with the best possible experience and opportunities at Arts 2 Heal everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework which is set out in Appendix A – The Arts 2 Heal Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers.

It is NOT the responsibility of employees, volunteers or participants at Arts 2 Heal to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is however their responsibility to act if they have concerns about the welfare of a young person, as explained in section 4.

This section will help to identify what is meant by good practice and poor practice.

2.2 Principles of Good Practice

2.2.1 By promoting good practice the occurrence of abuse of young people should be reduced and this should also protect Arts 2 Heal staff and volunteers, thus reducing the likelihood of allegations arising.

2.2.2 All personnel (paid and voluntary) should adhere to the following principles and action:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- If involved in a 1:1 situation, give some thought before the meeting to the venue and environment where the meeting will take place. Meet in an open, transparent space. If privacy is needed, make sure that the room/office has windows and is situated in a natural walkway. Always inform a colleague of your meeting.

If Arts 2 Heal staff or volunteers are visitors to a family home school or other setting, the meeting and the meeting place should be agreed with the host's relevant lead person (in most cases the parents or legal guardians of the young person).

- Make the experience of your engagement with the young person fun and enjoyable: promote fairness, confront and deal positively and pro-actively with bullying, harassment or any other inappropriate behaviour.
- Treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity.
- Always put the welfare of the young person first.
- Only use the mobile phone and electronic device supplied by Arts 2 Heal where possible (e.g for employees).
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with young people. Under the Sexual offences Act (2003) it is against the law for a person in a position of trust to engage in a relationship with a young person. (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a young person).
- In extreme cases where a young person is becoming a danger either to themselves, to other young people or to you, physical contact/restraint may be required, however to be judged lawful the force of restraint used must be proportionate to the consequences it is intended to prevent. Arts 2 Heal does not have a reasonable force policy as family member intervention or other settings policies should be followed at all times.
- If appropriate, involve Parents and Carers wherever possible, e.g. where young people need to be supervised in changing rooms, encourage Parents and Carers to take responsibility for their own child. If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure staff, volunteer's, parents and carers or other appropriate adults work in pairs. If on school or other community setting premises, liaise with the setting to understand and where appropriate follow their policy.

2.3 Staff & Volunteer Responsibilities

- Keep up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance in your profession.
- Be an excellent role model: this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Always give enthusiastic/constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of the young person, do not risk sacrifice welfare in the desire for team/personal achievements. Avoid pushing them against their will.

- Do not undertake any medical treatment on a young person, unless qualified to do so. Arts 2 Heal should secure written parental consent for its qualified members of staff to act in loco parentis, to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment where such situations arise.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given. (Appendix B). Report ANY incident to both the Arts 2 Heal line manager and the setting safeguarding lead.
- All staff must seek clarification from their managers regarding the appropriate risk assessment documents they should use for each activity/site/venue.

2.4 Staff & Volunteer Ratios

2.4.1 All activities/events must comply with the ratios set by the relevant policy where appropriate.

Arts 2 Heal staff and volunteers will always adhere to these ratios, as well as consult with the appropriate host agency when working in another setting.

2.5 Overnight trips

For accompanying young people on trips or overnight stays, all staff and volunteers must refer to the Arts 2 Heal host and organising partners' policy and procedures.

2.6 Other supervision of young people

2.6.1

- Where possible young people should be supervised at all times in the changing rooms or equivalent environment by two members of staff or volunteers. If only one member of staff or volunteer is available then the member of staff or volunteer should be positioned by the door, with the door open (where appropriate) to supervise the young people.
- Adult staff or volunteers should not change or shower at the same time using the same facility as young people.
- If you are involved in a mixed gender activity, separate facilities should be made available.
- If young people are uncomfortable changing or showering in public no pressure should be placed on them to do so. Encourage them to do this at home.

- If your activity/event has participants with disabilities involve them and their parents and/or carers in deciding how they should be assisted and ensure they are able to consent to the assistance that is offered.
- No photographic equipment to be used in the changing rooms. This includes cameras, video cameras and mobile phones with photographic capabilities.

2.7 Medical Treatment of Young People

2.7.1

- Arts 2 Heal staff and/or volunteers should never administer any medical treatment or emergency first aid unless fully qualified and the treatment is required in an emergency.

First priority should always be to seek the relevant and appropriate medical and emergency first aid help from the designated officer or a medical professional.

- In the event that staff or volunteers are required to administer emergency first aid the relevant emergency first aid protocol should be followed at all times.
- Never transport a young person unless in an emergency; in this case it is the staff or volunteer member's responsibility to contact the young person's parents and/or carers

BEFORE they transport the young person. In such circumstances, always transport the young person in the back seats of the car.

2.8 Poor Practice

2.8.1 The following should be avoided except in emergencies.

- Do not transport young people in your car unless in a medical emergency.
- Avoid spending time alone with young people away from others.

If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the line manager or appropriate person from the setting and the young person's parents and/or carers where possible. For example, a young person sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent or carer fails to arrive to pick a young person up at the end of a Arts 2 Heal activity. In all cases, such incidents should always be recorded (see Appendix B).

2.8.2 The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel:

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including any forms of inappropriate behaviour.

- Use of your mobile phone or tablet in directly communicating with a young person other than in extreme emergencies.
- Over friendly behaviour/nature with young people.
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun.
- Reducing a young person to tears as a form of control.
- Allowing allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded, unreported or not acted upon.
- Doing things of a personal nature that the young person can do themselves.
- Sharing a room with a young person.
- Meeting with young people in private or closed places.
- Unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of manual/physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the young person (where possible) and his/her parents/carers.

Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the young person's consent has been given.

2.8.3 If during your care or engagement you accidentally hurt a young person, the young person seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions and/or if the young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to your line manager or a colleague and the safeguarding lead officer in the setting if appropriate, as well as making a written record of it. If appropriate the Arts 2 Heal line manager or the setting lead officer should then inform the young person's parents or carers of the incident.

3. What is Child Abuse?

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. It commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

The main types of abuse are: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and bullying (which may or may not include aspects of the other forms of abuse). The abuser may be a family member,

someone the young person encounters in residential care or in the community. Any individual could abuse or neglect a young person directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the young person.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a young person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that, if not treated they may follow the individual into adulthood. Young people with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse has occurred.

3.2 Types of Abuse

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 for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

3.2.1 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.

3.2.2 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.

3.2.3 Emotional Abuse:

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 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 cyber 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.

3.2.4 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.

3.2.5 The Anti-bullying Alliance defines bullying as:

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying may come from another young person or an adult. There are four main types of bullying. It may be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages), emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

3.3 Indicators of Abuse

3.3.1 Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a young person is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent.
- The young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them.
- Another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person.
- Unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Being prevented from socialising with others.
- Displaying variations in eating patterns including over eating or loss of appetite.
- Losing weight for no apparent reason.
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.
- Over-tiredness.
- Suicidal threats or behaviours.
- Displaying frequent unexplained minor injuries.

3.3.2 It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place. More information can be found at

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/>

3.3.3 Signs of bullying include:

- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to participate in activities.
- Physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes.

- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

3.3.4 The above list is not exhaustive. More information can be found at

<http://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/>

It is NOT the responsibility of those working at Arts 2 Heal to decide that child abuse is occurring, it is however their responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting any incident to the relevant Safeguarding Officer or a Line Manager as well as completing an Incident Referral

Report Form (Appendix C).

3.4 Use of Photographic/Filming Equipment

3.4.1 There is evidence that some people have used activities or events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled people in vulnerable positions.

Therefore Arts 2 Heal is committed to adhere to the appropriate guidelines detailed below.

3.5 Recording Images of Young People

3.5.1 There have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to young people through the use of photographs on web sites and in other publications.

3.5.2 Therefore, the following guidelines must be followed:

- All young people featured in photographs/recordings must be appropriately dressed for the activity they are undertaking.
- The photograph/recording should ideally focus on the activity; where possible images of young people should be recorded in small groups.
- Arts 2 Heal staff or its agents will still be allowed to use video equipment as a legitimate aid and means of recording work and/or special occasions with the written consent of parents and carers / young person. However, any such use of video equipment must be confined to equipment supplied for the purpose by Arts 2 Heal and personal equipment may not be used.
- Care should be taken in the dissemination and storage of the material at all times and reporting of lost or stolen equipment containing material should be undertaken immediately including to the relevant lead officer.

3.6 Publishing Images of Young People

- If a photograph/recording is used, personal details of young people such as e-mail address, home address and telephone numbers should never be revealed.
- Parents and carers' permission should always be received to take and use an image of a young person. This ensures that parents and carers are aware of the way the image of their child is represented in the activity or within Arts 2 Heal as an organisation. A parent and carer photography permission question is included within Appendix D and can be distributed when required.
- Where images are obtained from or captured in another setting then written confirmation from the setting should clearly state that full written parent and carer consent has been obtained, including for sharing with and use by Arts 2 Heal.
- Where a story concerns an individual, (e.g. a specific child's story), particular attention should be paid to ensuring permission is gained from the parent or carer and young person to use a photograph/recording and relevant details.
- In order to guard against the possibility of a young person under a court order appearing on a website, the simultaneous streaming of images onto a website is not recommended. Delayed streaming also provides an opportunity for the editing of inappropriate clips, applying an increased level of consideration to the images of youngsters used on websites. Simple technology features such as watermarking may dissuade third parties from using or attempting to access controlled imagery.
- It is good practice to refresh any images used on websites periodically, although it should be accepted that those images which appear in printed form have longevity beyond the publisher's control

3.7 The use of Photographic/Filming Equipment by the Media

3.7.1 There is evidence that some people have used events and activities as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young people. Therefore, the following guidelines will be followed:

- If professional photographers are commissioned or the press is invited to an activity or event, it is the responsibility of the commissioning manager to ensure they are clear about expectations of them in relation to the welfare of young people.
- The photographer/camera person must have bona fide identification and be able to produce it on request.

- Participants and parents and carers must be informed that a photographer/camera person will attend an event and ensure that they give written consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- Arts 2 Heal will not allow unsupervised access to participants or one to one photo sessions at events/activities.
- Arts 2 Heal will not approve/allow photo sessions outside the event/activity.

3.8 The use of Photographic/Filming Equipment by Parents and Carers/Spectators

3.8.1 If parents and carers or others are intending to photograph or video at an event they should also be made aware of the expectations:

- Parents and carers and others should be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state their purpose for photography/filming.

3.8.2 In addition:

- Participants and parents and carers should be informed that if they have concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography/filming these should be reported to the event organiser or official and recorded in the same manner as any other child protection concern.
- Appropriate members of Arts 2 Heal staff should approach and challenge any person taking photographs who has not made themselves known and/or registered with the charity or the setting. They might need to refer it to the local police force if this person continues to record images unauthorised.

3.9 Guidelines – Texting Young People

3.9.1 The NSPCC has developed guidance on texting which has been adapted and is included within this policy. The use of text messaging to communicate with individual young participants increases the vulnerability of both the young person and (typically) the member of staff/volunteer. However, there may be exceptional circumstances in which it is justified, subject to appropriate safeguarding considerations. Similarly, group texts can be a useful means of contacting large numbers of participants to update them on information about an activity or event. The use of personal mobiles for sending texts to young people is expressly forbidden – all texts must be sent from mobiles supplied by Arts 2 Heal.

3.9.2 Guidelines for using Bulk (or Bundled) Text Messaging

- The young people's mobile phone numbers should be stored in either a locked secure cabinet, or on an electronic system which is password protected and encryption, with access only available to the relevant staff that have undertaken enhanced DBS checks (the mobile phone numbers should not be shared with anyone else).

- Where possible, all text messages must be sent via a bundle to a group of young people i.e. the same standard text message being sent to every member of the group. The text messaging system should never be used to send text messages on an individual basis (i.e. to just one person), or to fewer than five people unless expressly agreed with Arts 2 Heal management and parents / carers and young people themselves in advance.
- All text messages sent must make it clear to the young people receiving it that Arts 2 Heal has sent the message, rather than simply giving the mobile phone number that the system uses to send the message.
- Young people should not be given the opportunity to text back to the system; it should only be used as a one-way communication channel.

3.9.3 Guidelines for Texting Individual Young People

- The decision to use text messaging should not be made by a member of staff or volunteer in isolation and should be discussed and agreed with the relevant Director.

This will ensure that Arts 2 Heal safeguarding expectations and requirements can be clarified and an undertaking given by the person to comply with them.

- The content should relate solely to Arts 2 Heal activity or event. Messages should reflect the professional relationship between the Arts 2 Heal member of staff or volunteer and a young person, and that volunteer or member of staff's position of trust. Text messages and mobile phones must never be used for any other reason or in any other way.
- Young people should not be encouraged to text back; ideally it should only be used as a one-way communication channel. Young people should be made aware that, if or when they choose or need to text the member of staff or volunteer (for example to confirm attendance or advise on a travel delay), they should ensure that the content of messages relates only to matters relevant to the activity and that they are (like the member of staff) required to copy in either a parent or carer or the identified moderator to all communications.

3.9.4 Guidelines – for Texting by both Bulk and Individual Young People

- Only staff that have been through relevant safeguarding checks (e.g. enhanced level DBS checks and references) should use and have access to the text messaging system. All staff will have undertaken a recognised safeguarding training.
- The numbers of staff with access to the system, particularly data relating to young people, should be kept to a practical minimum, and their details recorded and maintained by the Designated Safeguarding Officer

Team. A record should be made of the mobile phone number(s) which will be used to send the texts – ideally for bulk texts, this should be a single number used consistently. Consent must be obtained prior to sending the young people text messages:

- For young people aged 15 or under, specific consent must be obtained from their parents or carers via a consent form.
- Parents and carers of younger children should be offered the option to be copied into any texts their child will be sent.
- Although parent and carer consent is not required for young people aged 16 and over, written consent must be obtained from these individuals themselves. Please note that for the over 16s it is still recommended that their parents and carers are also informed of the intention to send their children text messages, so as to show that Arts 2 Heal has taken steps to ensure their child's safety in this respect.
- The text messages which are sent must never contain any offensive, abusive or inappropriate language. To do so would trigger disciplinary procedures. If received, these should be reported using Appendix C.
- All of the text messages sent should include a sentence at the bottom which provides the young people with the opportunity to unsubscribe.
- All text messages sent to young people should also be sent to the relevant Arts 2 Heal manager to act as a moderator. Hence, it is essential that the moderator's mobile phone number is included in every 'communication group' that is set up that is relevant to them. Consideration will be given to initiating Arts 2 Heal child protection and disciplinary procedures should any breaches of this protocol arise, including consultation with or referral to statutory agencies if indications of illegal activity (e.g. grooming for abuse) come to light.

3.9.5 Guidance – Emailing Young People

For young people the safeguarding risks associated with email include:

- Inappropriate access to, use or sharing of personal details.
- Unwanted contact with young people by adults with ill intent.
- Being sent offensive or otherwise inappropriate material (If received, these should be reported using Appendix C).
- Online bullying by peers (including "Trolling").
- Grooming for sexual abuse.

- Direct contact and abuse.

For adults involved risks include:

- Misinterpretation of their communication with young people.
- Potential investigation (internal or by statutory agencies).
- Potential disciplinary action.
- In order to safeguard both the member of staff sending out the emails and the young person receiving them, Arts 2 Heal will adopt the same guidelines as outlined in section

3.9.4. Specifically, the sending of an email to a young person from a personal email

address is forbidden; any such email must be sent from an Arts 2 Heal email address.

3.9.6 Guidance – social networking websites

- Social networking services allow users to create their own content and share it with a vast network of individuals, sometimes referred to as online communities. People from all over the world can meet and share interests online. There are several hundred social networking services.
- Information about an event or campaign messages can be dissipated virally amongst supporters within online communities. Arts 2 Heal will give careful consideration to the use of social media outlets and balance the benefits of creativity, spontaneity and immediacy of the communication with the potential risks, including the risks to young people.

Potential risks can include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying by peers and people they consider ‘friends’.
- Posting personal information that can identify and locate a young person offline.
- Sexual grooming, luring, exploitation and abuse contact with strangers.
- Exposure to inappropriate content.
- Involvement in making or distributing illegal or inappropriate content.
- Theft of personal information.
- Exposure and interaction with others who encourage any forms of self-harm.
- Exposure to racist or hate material.

- Encouragement of violent behaviour.
- Glorifying activities such as drug taking or excessive drinking.
- Physical harm in making video content, such as enacting and imitating stunts.
- Risk taking activities.
- Leaving and running away from home as a result of contacts made online.

It is Arts 2 Heal policy that no member of staff or volunteer should be participating with any young person in any direct private contact via online or social media platforms. The misuse of electronic communication to make contact with or groom children is forbidden.

3.9.7 The NSPCC has developed good practice guidelines for social networking sites which Arts 2 Heal will commit to:

- That Arts 2 Heal will understand the safety aspects including what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour on a social networking service.
- That Arts 2 Heal will follow relevant legislation and good practice guidance when engaging with social media companies.
- That Arts 2 Heal will engage with social networking companies to ensure that they adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines.
- That Arts 2 Heal will ensure that online safeguarding issues are fully integrated into their existing safeguarding strategy, policies and procedures.

Further information can be found at <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

This part of the policy will be reviewed and updated regularly in recognition of the ever-evolving digital world, as will guidance issued to all Arts 2 Heal staff and volunteers.

4. Responding to Suspicions and Allegations

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 It is not the responsibility of anyone working or volunteering at Arts 2 Heal in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate people and authorities so that the necessary inquiries and actions are followed to protect the young person.

4.1.2 Staff and volunteers working in any setting where there may be particular practices for engaging with young people and/or responding to specific circumstances that may raise concerns (e.g. environments

where there are young people with special educational needs or disabilities who require physical contact) should be mindful of each specific environment and the individual needs of all children and young people. In all cases, staff and volunteers should seek clarity from colleagues as to the accepted practices and behaviours within the school or setting before starting the role to avoid the unnecessary risk of misunderstandings when observing practices that he/she may be concerned about. However, if unsure or if any suspicions arise, staff or volunteers should continue to raise these concerns with the relevant safeguarding lead for the avoidance of doubt.

4.2 Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse

4.2.1 Arts 2 Heal staff or volunteers may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. Staff or volunteers may see it happening, may suspect it is happening because of signs that have been noticed, or may have it reported by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

4.2.2 When a young person reports directly to a member of staff or a volunteer, it is particularly important for the member of staff or volunteer to respond appropriately. If a young person says or indicates that they are being abused, staff or volunteers should:

- Stay calm so as not to frighten the young person.
- Reassure the young person that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell.
- Listen to the young person, showing that you are taking them seriously.

It is helpful to the child to:

- Be calm and receptive
- Listen carefully without interrupting
- Communicate with the child appropriately
- Be aware of your non – verbal communication
- Take them seriously
- Acknowledge their courage and reassure them
- Let them know that you are going to do everything you can to help them

Do not:

- Show shock or disgust
- Ask questions to elicit more information. You can ask for clarification by repeating what the child has said
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Make negative comments about the abuser
- Make promises (“Everything will be alright.”)
- Agree to keep what the child has said a secret

- Keep questions to a minimum so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. (The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the young person has been led and ideas have been suggested when questioning). Only ask questions to clarify as per the relevant training undertaken.
- Inform the young person that you have to inform other people about what they have told you. Tell the young person this is to help stop the abuse continuing.
- Safety of the young person is paramount. If the young person needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue.
- Record all information on the Incident Referral Form (Appendix C).
- Report the incident to a member of the Designated Safeguarding Officer Team. When working in another setting, please make sure that you also follow the setting policies and contact the setting appointed Safeguarding Officer as a priority.

4.3 Recording Information

4.3.1 To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern (Appendix B) or as soon as possible afterwards. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what is your personal knowledge and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions.

4.3.2 Information should include the following:

- The young person's name, age and date of birth.
- The young person's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's.
- The nature of the allegation including dates, times and any other relevant information.
- A description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size etc. Also, any indirect signs such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The young person's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred.
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

Liaise with your Designated Safeguarding Officers Team and if working in a school or other setting, the

setting or School's Safeguarding Officer. It is not your responsibility to contact parents or carers to ascertain what is the best way to approach the parents or carers. Once contacted record this communication.

4.4 Reporting the Concern

4.4.1 All concerns, suspicions and allegations **MUST** be reported appropriately. It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

4.4.2 When working within another setting, please ensure that you follow the setting's Child Protection Policy as well as informing the appointed Safeguarding Officer.

4.4.3 Arts 2 Heal expects its members of staff and volunteers to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a young person immediately with their Line Manager, who will then contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer Team and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken.

4.4.4 If any of these people are not available then immediately seek advice from the NSPCC helpline 0808 800 5000, your local Children's Social Care department or the police. (Arts 2 Heal staff and volunteers should ensure they have the key Local Authority numbers stored in their mobile phones).

4.4.5 Two reporting procedure flow charts for allegations involving either a young person (Appendix E) or member of staff/volunteer (Appendix F) are available. Arts 2 Heal are not child protection experts and are not responsible for determining whether or not abuse has taken place. All suspicions and allegations must be shared with professional agencies that are responsible for child protection. Children's Social Care have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the young person and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the young person and making inquiries jointly with the police.

NB: If there is any doubt, you must report the incident: it may be just one of a series of other incidents which together cause concern. Where there is a complaint or allegation against an employee or volunteer, there may be three types of investigation.

- Criminal in which case the police are immediately involved.
- Child protection in which case the social services (and possibly) the police will be involved.
- Disciplinary or misconduct in which case Arts 2 Heal will be involved.

4.4.6 Any suspicion that a young person has been abused by an employee or a volunteer should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer Team, who will take appropriate steps to ensure the

safety of the young person in question and any other young people who may be at risk. If working in another setting, then the setting Designated Safeguarding Officer should be informed immediately.

The Arts 2 Heal Designated Safeguarding Officer Team should:

- Refer the matters within 24 hours to the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer and the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- Include details of the allegation on a secured file on its internal secure systems.
- The parent or carer of the young person will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- The Director of HR & Volunteering should be notified, if applicable, to implement any immediate disciplinary proceedings that may be needed.
- If applicable, the Director of HR & Volunteering should notify the relevant line manager and any relevant other parties (e.g. seconded staff employers) that the member of staff may be subject to investigation.
- If appropriate, the Digital Marketing Director should also be notified to decide who will deal with any media interest. Notwithstanding the need to contact the people listed above, it is critical to maintain confidentiality on a need-to-know basis.

4.4.7 Allegations of abuse can be made some time after the event. When such allegations are made, you should follow the same procedures and have the matter reported to social services. This is because other young people may be at risk from the alleged abuser. Anyone who has a previous conviction for offences related to abuse against children is automatically excluded from working with young people.

4.5 Concerns outside the immediate environment

4.5.1 You may become concerned of possible abuse to a young person which is taking place outside the immediate Arts 2 Heal working environment i.e. abuse at home. You must still report your concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer Team

4.5 Concerns Outside the Immediate Environment

4.5.1

There may be occasions when staff or volunteers become concerned that a young person is being abused or is at risk of abuse outside of Arts 2 Heal's activities — for example, at home, in school, or within their community.

4.5.2

In such circumstances, it is essential that concerns are still raised with the Designated Safeguarding Officer Team. They will ensure the matter is reported to the appropriate external agency, such as Children's Social Care or the police, without delay.

4.5.3

Staff and volunteers must not attempt to investigate the concern themselves or confront any individual suspected of abuse. They must document their concerns using the Incident Referral Form (Appendix C) and follow the same recording and reporting procedures as outlined in earlier sections.

4.5.4

Arts 2 Heal will liaise with the relevant statutory agencies to ensure the young person receives the support and protection required. All staff and volunteers must maintain confidentiality and act in accordance with the organisation's safeguarding protocols.

4.6 Process for Responding to Suspicions and Allegations Concerning a Young Person

4.6.1

The following steps must be followed when responding to suspicions or allegations involving a young person:

- **Immediate Safety:** Ensure the immediate safety of the young person. If urgent medical attention is needed, call emergency services and make them aware the situation involves a safeguarding concern.
- **Record and Report:** Accurately record the concern using Appendix C and report it to the Designated Safeguarding Officer Team.
- **External Reporting:** The Designated Safeguarding Officer Team will assess the information and, if necessary, make a referral to Children's Social Care or the police.
- **Communication:** Where applicable, Arts 2 Heal will liaise with external safeguarding leads in partner organisations, schools, or community settings.
- **Follow-up:** All actions taken will be documented, and updates will be shared on a need-to-know basis only. Arts 2 Heal will support any young person involved and ensure they are kept informed where appropriate.

4.6.2

Arts 2 Heal will always prioritise the welfare of the young person and act in line with statutory guidance including *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2018, updated 2023).

4.7 Confidentiality

4.7.1

Arts 2 Heal recognises that all matters relating to safeguarding are confidential. Any information shared about a young person will be done so on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with data protection laws and safeguarding protocols.

4.7.2

Confidentiality must never be promised to a young person disclosing abuse. Staff should explain that they have a responsibility to report concerns in order to keep them safe.

4.7.3

Information will only be shared with individuals or agencies who need it to protect the welfare of the young person. All records will be securely stored and accessed only by those authorised.

4.8 Internal Inquiries and Suspensions

4.8.1

Where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or volunteer, Arts 2 Heal will carry out an internal inquiry once any statutory investigation has concluded.

4.8.2

Depending on the nature of the allegation, the staff member or volunteer may be suspended as a precautionary measure pending the outcome of investigations. Suspension is not an indication of guilt but a means to ensure safety and protect all parties.

4.8.3

Arts 2 Heal will cooperate fully with statutory investigations. Where misconduct is established, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including dismissal or termination of the volunteer agreement.

4.8.4

Any outcomes of internal inquiries will be documented and stored securely. If an individual is dismissed or resigns before the conclusion of the investigation, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be informed as required by law.

5. Recruiting and Selecting Personnel

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1

Arts 2 Heal recognises that the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers is essential to safeguarding young people. The organisation is committed to ensuring that its recruitment and selection procedures deter, reject, or identify individuals who might pose a risk to children and young people.

5.1.2

We aim to recruit the most suitable people based on their knowledge, skills, qualifications, experience, and commitment to safeguarding, while also making sure that appropriate checks and safeguarding procedures are fully embedded throughout the process.

5.2 Controlling Access to Children

5.2.1

In order to prevent unsuitable individuals from gaining access to young people, Arts 2 Heal will ensure that:

- All roles involving direct or unsupervised work with children are subject to Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, including checks against the Barred Lists for working with children.
- At least two written references are obtained for all prospective staff and volunteers, and these are followed up and verified.
- Gaps in employment history are explored at interview.
- Identity, qualifications, and the right to work in the UK are confirmed.
- Any previous convictions are risk-assessed in accordance with Arts 2 Heal's Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy and safeguarding obligations.

5.2.2

All recruitment materials will clearly state that safeguarding and child protection is a priority, and that appropriate checks will be conducted. Job descriptions and person specifications will reflect responsibilities for safeguarding.

5.3 Recruitment, Selection and Induction

5.3.1

The recruitment process for any role working with children or young people will include:

- A safeguarding statement in job advertisements and application packs.
- A face-to-face or virtual interview using a structured set of safeguarding-related questions.
- Confirmation of identity and qualifications.
- A full Enhanced DBS check before work commences.

5.3.2

All new staff and volunteers will undergo an induction process which includes:

- Reading and signing the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Code of Conduct (Appendix A).
- Awareness training on identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns.
- Introduction to the Designated Safeguarding Officer Team and their contact details.
- Role-specific expectations relating to safeguarding and professional boundaries.

5.3.3

A probationary period will be in place for new staff and volunteers. Continued engagement is subject to satisfactory performance and adherence to Arts 2 Heal's safeguarding policies.

5.4 Training

5.4.1

Arts 2 Heal is committed to providing ongoing training and support to staff and volunteers to ensure they understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

5.4.2

This includes:

- Mandatory safeguarding training during induction for all staff, volunteers, and trustees.
- Regular refresher training (every 2 years, or sooner if legislation changes).
- Specialist training for Designated Safeguarding Officers in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Additional training on emerging issues such as online safety, radicalisation, child sexual exploitation, and mental health where relevant.

5.4.3

Training attendance will be recorded and monitored. Individuals who fail to complete mandatory training may be suspended from direct work with children and young people until such time as the training is completed.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, confirm that I have read and understood the Arts 2 Heal Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy. I agree to adhere to the principles, procedures, and expectations outlined within this policy and to take all necessary steps to protect the safety and well-being of children and young people in my care.

I understand that failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or referral to external agencies.

Name:

Signature:

Position:

Date: