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Atlas Arts

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

*Reviewed September 2024*

We believe everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to perform our practise everyone follows procedures to protect children and is aware of how to appropriately report and safeguarding concerns.

**THE THREE ELEMENTS OF OUR POLICY**

**Prevention**through awareness of each individual child’s needs

**Definitions**of Child Abuse and Neglect

**Procedures**for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases, of abuse.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, providing children and young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst in the care of The Atlas Arts and to allow staff and any volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

**PREVENTION**

## Our staff have all read and are familiar with the ‘Working together to safeguard Children 2018’ framework. Our manager and safeguarding lead has completed NSPCC training in ‘Safer Recruitment’ and all of our staff have completed their ‘Prevent’ Training against radicalisation.

At Atlas arts we promise to

* Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel welcome and safe. They will be given a tour of the venue and shown the appropriate places to use the bathroom, get changed etc. They will also be made aware of venue policies and procedure (First aid/ fire safety)
* Children will be informed of the correct person to speak to should they need to disclose or share anything that has made them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
* We will ensure that children are treated with respect and dignity.
* Non-discrimination is an integral part of the principle of equality. Therefore, we will treat every child as an individual and will not discriminate on grounds such as to gender, race, heritage, sexuality, disability, language, religion, national or social origin, property or birth.
* Children will use the buddy system to go to the bathroom if they are at events such as competitions or performances.
* To ensure that children are supervised appropriately: We adhere to the NSPCC guidelines with regards to ratios.

**DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm, or fails to act to prevent harm. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection.

**Physical Abuse** – May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.

**Sexual Abuse** – Forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening, may involve: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts; non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities; or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Neglect** – Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

**Emotional Abuse** – The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age and developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, for example witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

**PROCEDURES**

Atlas Arts will follow the Child Protection Procedures that have been endorsed by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. LADOs details and number will be made available at the venue.

**Suspicion of Abuse** – If you see or suspect abuse of a child, immediately make this known to the designated individual/manager responsible for child protection.

**Disclosure of Abuse** – If a child tells you that they or another child or young person is being abused:

* Always stop and listen straight away, show that you take their allegations seriously
* Encourage the child to talk, but do not ask leading questions, interrupt or ask the child to repeat themselves
* Never promise that you will keep what is said confidential or secret – explain that if you are told something very important you will need to sort it out, but that you will only tell the people who need to know
* Record what you have been told accurately and as soon as possible. Use the child’s own words if possible. Make a note of the time, location, whether anyone else present and of the child’s demeanour
* Ensure that your concerns are reported immediately to the designated individual/manager
* Do not confront the alleged abuser

**Handling Allegations**

* If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff it must be reported as a matter of urgency to the designated individual/manager for child protection who will refer to the Intake and Assessment team
* If the allegation is against the designated person then the information should be reported to the venue manager or directly to Children’s Services (This would generally be referred to the authority in which the alleged incident took place)
* The alleged perpetrator should not be made aware of the allegation at this point

**Recording** – In all situations the details of allegation or reported incident must be recorded. Make accurate notes of time, dates, incident or disclosure, people involved, what was said and done and by whom, action taken to investigate, further action taken e.g. suspension of individual and if relevant: reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, name of person reporting and to whom it was reported.

The record must be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know.

**Working within Schools** – When working within schools I will adhere to the school’s safeguarding and child protection policies. Ensuring knowledge of their DSLs and recording and reporting procedures. If working within a different local authority, I will ensure awareness of local LADO contact details and information.

**Atlas Arts is currently a Lone Provider**

DSL: Georgina Bunn