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Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy

1. General Statement

- 1.1. This policy has been established in consultation with the Board of Trustees and Management Board of the Wycombe Arts Centre (WAC).
- 1.2. WAC aims to demonstrate a caring, respectful attitude towards all employees, Trustees, Board members and users of our facilities.
- 1.3. The policy sets out to promote good relations between adults and children that use the Arts Centre. Protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse should be an integral part and practice of all activity carried out in the name of the Wycombe Arts Centre.
- 1.4. All our employees and volunteers will be provided with a copy of this document. This policy is linked to our equal opportunities policy.

2. Background

- 2.1. WAC provides public performances of theatre, dance and music shows and events; workshops and courses related arts, crafts and enterprise activities.
- 2.2. The Centre is available for hire to a range of community groups which offer activities for adults and young people. These activities take place in the two buildings comprising at WAC.
- 2.3. Events at the Centre are generally of a short duration although individuals of all ages may attend for a number of short visits for rehearsals or for a weekly participatory course. Often, children, young people and vulnerable

adults attending the Arts Centre do so under the auspices of another organisation.

3. The Policy

- 3.1. In our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults, we respect and defend their individual rights.
- 3.2. We do not countenance any form of physical violence or abuse whether committed by or inflicted upon either adults or young people. It also means that we do not countenance verbal insults or destructive criticism.
- 3.3. The Wycombe Arts Centre encourages respect for others' background, appearance, personality, abilities, opinions and preferences.
- 3.4. Adults working with children under the auspices of the Arts Centre must accept responsibility and exercise due care in all activities, so that young people are not exposed to risk through adult negligence or incompetence.

4. Vetting adults working with children

- 4.1. All adults, whether acting as employees, volunteers or hirers at WAC must declare any criminal convictions they may have which involve abuse against children and vulnerable adults, however old these convictions may be.
- 4.2. Employees may be required to agree to an enhanced disclosure by the Criminal Records Bureau and must provide evidence of such disclosure. All volunteers will be required to sign an application form including a declaration that they have no convictions or criminal proceedings pending which relate to the alleged abuse of children.

5. Guidelines to minimise risk to children

- 5.1. Employees and volunteers for WAC will not be permitted to work on their own with groups of children or young people unless they are fully endorsed by the Criminal Records Bureau Advanced Disclosure. Normally, a minimum of two responsible adults will be required to supervise a group. Parents and/or carers will always be permitted to stay and accompany children in any activity. Adults should ensure that the touch and physical contact they use is not exploitative and not open to misunderstanding. Any material that is collected on children relative to their address, special

needs etc. is confidential and should not be shared with others, physically or virtually, unless permission is given by the parent or carer.

5.2. This includes any photographs audio recordings or video footage taken of children and vulnerable adults engaged in Centre activities.

6. Responding to concern about possible abuse of a child

6.1. In the event of a young person disclosing or alleging abuse that identifies an adult or another young person connected to WAC as the alleged perpetrator, it is important that this is responded to quickly and seriously. Parents of the child must be informed in the first instance.

6.2. The alleged perpetrator must be asked to step down from the group and not to make contact with any member of the group until investigations are completed. In consultation with parents, advice should be sought from local Social Services. A special meeting of WAC Management Board should be called to decide upon action internal to the organisation. If a child discloses information about abuse that is happening outside of the Arts Centre - in school or the wider community then again parents must be informed. If the abuse seems to emanate from the young person's home, a consultation with the local child protection services in Social Services should be made in the first instance.

6.3. An appropriate external agency should always be contacted and the issue not dealt with internally by WAC.

6.4. It is unlikely that many groups will experience the trauma of abuse disclosed or discovered. However, these circumstances require diplomatic and careful handling. Emotions can run high, and adults will need to be enabled to address their feelings purposefully in formal group meetings.

6.5. Informal discussions should be discouraged. Advice and support can be made available through the Social Services and can be sought from WAC Management Board.

7. Code of behaviour for staff including visiting contractors

7.1. Child centred approach all children, young people and vulnerable adults are to be:

- Treated equally
- Treated with respect
- Listened to

- Involved in decision making processes as appropriate
- Encouraged and supported
- Welcomed by all staff members

8. Facilitators and staff

8.1. All facilitators and staff working with children, young people and vulnerable adults at WAC are required to:

- Use appropriate language
- Lead by example
- Create an atmosphere of trust
- Respect personal boundaries
- Discuss and establish a mutual code of behaviour to be adhered to during their time at the centre between young people and the staff/visiting contractors
- Be aware of children's limitations and of any special needs/requirements
- Provide a safe, supervised working environment
- Ensure children are supervised at all times and ensure all children have been collected safely at the end of the workshops
- Respect differences of ability, culture, religion and race

9. Good practice

9.1. Details of each child participating in an activity must be registered i.e.name, contact details, and parent/carers name. Medical conditions and any special requirements should also be noted

9.2. Parents/carers must be made fully aware by the facilitator/staff of the importance of prompt collection of children following the workshop

9.3. Productions staged by visiting contractors i.e. school musicals/children's stage schools must be briefed on their responsibility to provide adequate supervision of all participants during rehearsal, performance and collection times of each show. WAC will not be held responsible for supervision. Visiting companies will be requested to read and sign the WAC Centre's policy

9.4. All staff and visiting practitioners must be made aware of the centres Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult policy

- 9.5. Any concerns regarding children, young people or vulnerable adults must be reported to the Arts Centre Manager
- 9.6. Depending on the activity and age of the children we advise a ratio of one adult supervisor to every ten participants. In the case of schools participating in workshops, an artist and school teacher must be present to facilitate the session
- 9.7. If the artists are required to document their work with children and young people artists must secure permission from primary carers to take photographs or video
- 9.8. All media coverage or publicity photographs (must be cleared in advance by primary carers

10. Health and safety

- 10.1. Never leave children unsupervised or unattended
- 10.2. Do not allow children use any dangerous materials
- 10.3. Provide appropriate instruction and guidance when using unfamiliar techniques or materials i.e. art classes
- 10.4. Provide a safe environment, ensuring workshop room is clean and floor space is clear
- 10.5. Limit class size according to activity to avoid overcrowding in the workshops space and to ensure adequate adult supervision
- 10.6. Ensure a first aid kit is available
- 10.7. NB: All incidents must be logged in an incident report book