

Safeguarding Policies Including Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection Procedures for OmniArts GB

This policy covers any and all work carried out by OmniArts GB including but not limited to: group sessions, mentoring, peer chats, and workshops. This policy applies to anyone working for or with OmniArts GB, including but not limited to: students, clients, paid staff, contractors and volunteers.

Key details

Policy prepared by:	Becki Short
Policy became operational on:	May 2021
Next review date:	May 2022

Safeguarding Policy

We are committed to ensuring safe environments for children/young people, and vulnerable adults and believe that it is always unacceptable for anyone to experience abuse of any kind (<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect>). We recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of anyone working with, or receiving services from us, by a commitment to recommend and uphold best practices which protect them. We have a zero tolerance against abuse and exploitation of any person.

We acknowledge that every person is a multi-faceted individual, with intersectional identities. We are committed to keeping everyone working with us safe, whilst also taking into account that people from marginalised groups face additional discrimination and barriers (eg: racism, ableism, queerphobia, ageism etc). All our policies are created and implemented with this in mind, and an overall aim of justice for all – meaning we understand that in some situations, different and/or more resources are going to be required for some people than others.

We see all people we work with as an individual, not a statistic, and if we find a policy we have unintentionally discriminates against someone, we review and update them as soon as we are able. We are committed to ongoing anti-bias learning and being actively anti-racist, anti-ableist, anti-sexist, anti-queerphobic, anti-fatphobic and anti-discriminatory.

The purpose of the policy:

- to protect children & vulnerable adults who receive OmniArts GB's services.
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect someone may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults namely:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- SEND code of practice 2015
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children Act 2004
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Education Act 2002
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- The United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child 1992
- The Children Act 1989

This policy should be read alongside the following policies and procedures:

- Data Protection
- Health and Safety
- Behaviour Codes

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person/vulnerable adult is paramount
- all children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- some children and vulnerable adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- working in partnership with children, vulnerable adults, their families, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

We seek to keep children and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Adopting protection guidelines through procedures and safe working practice.
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures.
- Ensuring all necessary checks are made for people working with or for us.
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely, and sharing information about children and vulnerable adults protection and safe working practice with children, caregivers, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving caregivers, families, children and vulnerable adults appropriately.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- Building a balanced relationship based on mutual trust which empowers them to share in the decision making process.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Ensuring any bullying or discrimination both verbal and physical is addressed, and taking action where necessary, with the welfare of all involved in mind.

- Ensuring everyone working for or with us are a positive role model for working with other people.
- Keeping up-to-date with health & safety legislation.
- Staying informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- Undertaking relevant development and training.
- Holding a register of every person involved in work with us, and retaining a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies for each person.

Contact Details

- Child Protection Officer: Becki Short: 07584662225
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000: (8am – 10pm Mon-Fri and 9am – 6pm weekends)
- Childline: 0800 1111 (7:30am–midnight Mon-Fri and 9am–midnight weekends)
- Hourglass: 0808 808 8141 (9am-5pm Mon-Fri)

Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy and Procedures

Designated Safeguarding Officer: Becki Short: Responsibilities

Becki Short is responsible for handling reports or concerns about the protection of vulnerable people appropriately and in accordance with the procedures that underpin this policy. This includes:

- monitoring and recording safeguarding concerns
- ensuring referrals to the relevant authorities happen without delay
- updating safeguarding training for all staff
- ensuring this policy is reviewed regularly
- ensuring it is implemented throughout the organisation and safeguarding training given
- ensuring monitoring and recording procedures are implemented

What is Disclosure? (*Information taken from NSPCC*)

Disclosure is the process by which children and young people start to share their experiences of abuse with others. This can take place over a long period of time – it is a journey, not one act or action. Children may disclose directly or indirectly and sometimes they may start sharing details of abuse before they are ready to put their thoughts and feelings in order.

How disclosure happens

People may not always be aware that they are disclosing abuse through their actions and behaviour. Disclosure of abuse can happen in a variety of ways, either in full or partially including:

- directly – making specific verbal statements about what's happened to them
- indirectly – making ambiguous verbal statements which suggest something is wrong
- behaviourally – displaying behaviour that signals something is wrong (this may or may not be deliberate)
- non-verbally – writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in other ways.

Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or vulnerable adult

- We take all disclosures of abuse seriously. Not all disclosures will lead to a formal report of abuse or a case being made or being taken to court, but all disclosures (both full and partial) will be recorded, and followed up in any way that is appropriate.

- Any adult working with us who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that abuse may have occurred can seek advice from:
 - Becki Short, our designated safeguarding officer
 - the NSPCC (children)
 - Hourglass (vulnerable adults)
 - the local authority children's services of the child concerned
- Any referral to the above should be confirmed in writing within a maximum of 48 hours; ideally within 24 hours. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer.
- Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual children, young people, vulnerable adults and families shared with others on a strictly need-to-know basis.

Recording concerns and information sharing

- In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident will be recorded, regardless of whether or not the concerns have been shared with a statutory child protection agency.
- An accurate note shall be made of the date and time of the incident or disclosure, the parties involved, what was said or done and by whom, any action taken to investigate the matter, any further action taken eg. suspension of an individual, where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, and the name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported.
- The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

Rights & Confidentiality

- No matter how you may feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the person who has reported or is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998. Remember also that any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.
- In criminal law the Crown, or other prosecuting authority, has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Online safety

We recognise that the online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however it can also present risks and challenges. We have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults working with or for us are protected from potential harm online.

We seek to keep children and vulnerable adults safe online by:

- ensuring open communication is kept between ourselves, staff, volunteers and children and vulnerable adults around expectations of how to conduct themselves online.
- supporting and encouraging people using our services to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others.
- supporting caregivers to do what they can to keep their children safe online.
- ensuring personal information about anyone working for or with us is held securely and shared only as appropriate.
- ensuring that images of children, young people and families are used only after their written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given.

Managing sensitive information

- Permission will be sought from the relevant people (caregivers or/and students) for use of any media featuring people working with us for promotional or other purposes, and all images will be stored safely and securely, for only as long as is necessary.
- We ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of everyone working with us including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as DBS.

Suspicion of abuse

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child/vulnerable adult, please make this known to the person with responsibility for child protection (Becki Short). If you suspect that the person with responsibility for child protection is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to another member of the team, or one of the organisations listed under “contact details” in the safeguarding policy.
- Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved.
- If a serious allegation is made against any person working for or with us, that individual will be suspended immediately, and have no unsupervised contact with any child or vulnerable adult until the investigation is concluded.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

- An Enhanced DBS will be required for anyone working for or with us who will have unsupervised contact with children and/or vulnerable adults. A standard disclosure may be required for anyone with supervised contact with children and/or vulnerable adults.
- We have a written code of practice for the handling of DBS information.
- We will ensure that information contained in a DBS is not misused.

We are committed to reviewing these policies and procedures annually.

This policy was last reviewed on: 16/05/2021 Signed: *Becki Short*