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WE ALL MAKE THE STORY HAPPEN

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

Safeguarding

Health & Safety

Code of Conduct

2024/2025

(Revised June 2024)

- INTRODUCTION

The welfare of the child is paramount. It is the responsibility of all staff members to protect children* (people under 18 years of age or up to the age of 24 for those with additional needs) and vulnerable adults* from abuse. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. All staff (paid/unpaid) working with Doorstep Arts has a responsibility to report concerns to Co-Directors Jade Campbell, Polly Ferguson-Carruthers and Dr Erin Walcon.

*'Children' are defined as those under the age of 18. 'Vulnerable adults' are those who are, or maybe, unable to take care of themselves from harm or exploitation of others.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Doorstep Arts are fully committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults attending any of our activities are protected and kept safe from harm.

To this end Doorstep Arts will provide a clear concise child protection policy and make it available to all of its practitioners and staff. All practitioners and staff who have unsupervised contact with children carry an enhanced DBS check.

- POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To provide a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults and keep them from harm.
- To ensure practitioners/volunteers who have direct access to children and vulnerable adults are kept informed, supported and protected.
- To ensure children and vulnerable adults are respected, listened to and taken seriously.

- To provide support and encouragement to parent/guardians/volunteers etc. to address the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

- OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives set by Doorstep Arts to achieve these aims are:

- Raise awareness through training.
- To implement effective procedures for recording and responding to incidents, complaints and alleged or suspected abuse.

- GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Good practice creates a positive child protection climate and assists in protecting staff from false allegations of abuse. Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment, encouraging no secrets and unobserved or private situations.
- Treating all people equally with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults first.
- Maintaining safe and appropriate distance (e.g. It is not appropriate to share a room/cubicle with them)
- Building a balanced, healthy and professional relationship based on mutual trust, that empowers children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Making activities fun and enjoyable.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Record any injuries sustained accurately according to the venues accident policy.

- Ensure language used around children and young people is appropriate at all times.
- If an exchange of phone number occurs between lead artist and young person, this needs to be for an appropriate reason relating to the project, session or workshop and should be deleted by all parties after the duration.
- PARENTS ATTENDING SESSIONS

As part of our code of good practice, and in order to keep sessions safe, enjoyable, and fun, we operate a policy that parents/guardians do not attend or observe weekly workshops sessions, unless there is a reason why a parent presence is required (i.e. specific medical condition, behavioural need, young age or disability requires additional parental presence for particular reason). Parental presence or observation of sessions is only allowed with prior permission - if it has been discussed with staff in advance and the Lead Artist delivering the session has agreed it in collaboration with the Doorstep Directors. The end of term performance is open to all parents and guardians and other friends and family members.

Health and Safety/Safeguarding

Doorstep Arts is committed to excellence in all aspects of its undertaking, including its management of Health and Safety/Safeguarding.

As fully qualified and experienced facilitators we have appropriate facilitation and safeguarding qualifications, enhanced DBS checks and full insurance to work with children.

In addition to its statutory obligations for Health and Safety at work, we acknowledge the special responsibilities we hold for the Health and Safety, well-being and welfare of the young people and others who participate in our activities.

Our policy is to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health & Safety at work of our staff and the Health and Safety of our members and any other persons who may be affected by our undertaking.

We will comply, as a minimum, with the requirements of relevant Health and Safety legislation, approved codes of practice and, as appropriate, guidance published by the Health and Safety Executive and/or other recognised industry bodies.

We will seek to continually improve our Health and Safety performance in order to raise standards and reduce the potential for occupational injuries and/or cases of ill- health.

Our objective is to achieve a business culture with a 'zero tolerance' to unnecessary Health and Safety hazards and risks and, thereby, reduce the incidence of accidents, incidents and/or cases of occupational ill-health.

Our commitment is to minimise unnecessary hazards and risks and ensure that Health and Safety actively contributes to the success of the business, and will be supported by ensuring the real engagement of our employees and, as necessary, others in delivering good Health and Safety.

Our staff and, as appropriate, others will be made aware of our Health and Safety policy, our commitment to its effective implementation and their responsibility to support the business in its effective implementation.

We maintain the following live documents as part of our regular procedures:

- Enhanced DBS documents
- Public liability insurance documents
- NVQ3 Youth Work Qualification Documents/Academic Qualifications/Teacher

Training qualifications

- Child Safeguarding Documents
- Risk Assessments

Refer to our Social Media & Anti Cyber Bullying Policy for more details on how we keep children and young people safe online.

Code of Conduct

We pride ourselves on the easy going and fun atmosphere that prevails at all our workshops, projects and activities. We therefore insist that the parent / guardian or other person acting in "loco parentis" fully advise us when booking, of any illness, disability, social or behavioural problems that a youngster currently has or has recently experienced, which might affect the youngster or other guests during their rehearsals or workshops.

This advice must also be confirmed in writing at the earliest opportunity. We will carefully consider matters and advise you whether we have the staff and facilities to provide an appropriate experience in these circumstances, with particular reference to such considerations as access, successful participation and health and safety.

We always reserve the right to exclude any person after workshop commencement if his/her behaviour is incompatible with the general enjoyment and well-being of others. In these circumstances, the collection would be entirely the responsibility and at the expense of the person acting in "loco parentis," to whom any costs for damage and other expenses incurred would also be charged.

We will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents and carers, staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training

We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice at regular intervals.

South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures have been developed to support agencies within the South West to enable them to provide effective safeguarding. Doorstep Arts is committed to using the 'South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures' to underpin our work.

For their full policies and procedures please visit <https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/>

Members must:

- treat all children and young people with respect
- provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
- ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people, or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy/encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned
- be aware that even physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted
- recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations /suspicions of abuse

REMEMBER:

- Reflection is good practice and key to keeping children and young people safe in the space in which you are working.
- Staff are required to hold regular termly review sessions and to record any concerns and act accordingly.
- If you have a concern around a child's well-being, please record it on an incident or accident form and notify your line-manager.
- All records are the responsibility of Lead artists.

Members must not:

- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people
- allow themselves to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour/make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- show favouritism to any individual
- rely on their good name or that of Doorstep Arts to protect them
- believe 'it could never happen to me'
- take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach

If a child or young person makes a disclosure to you or you observe any evidence of harm you should:

- stay calm
- listen carefully to what is said
- find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- allow the child to continue at her/his own pace
- ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- record in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.

• **Safeguarding Adults: Code of Conduct**

- Doorstep Arts works in and with the community on a range of projects. As described in our equal opportunities policy we aim to 'challenge discrimination in all areas of our organisation' As such our work may involve those "who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation"
- In order to support the vulnerable adults who work, volunteer and engage with Doorstep Art's work we want to support their wellbeing as part of our safeguarding policies & procedures.
- Reflective practice, supervision, group and individual support are key elements of Doorstep Art's work practice and we will use these and our Safeguarding children referral process to support vulnerable people appropriately.

Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers

In the case of Doorstep Arts receiving an allegation that a volunteer or member of staff who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

You should contact the Duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01803 208541

Complete the form in all cases where an allegation of abuse is made against a paid employee or volunteer working with children or young people on behalf of your organisation/service. The completed form should be sent to the Safeguarding & Reviewing Unit at Torbay Council by email to SARS@torbay.gov.uk

A designated person

Doorstep Arts has agreed to have a designated person to be responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.

The role of that person is to:

- receive information from staff, volunteers, children or parents and carers who have child protection concerns and record it
- assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate
- consult initially with a statutory child protection agency such as the local social services department or health board, or the NSPCC, to test out any doubts or uncertainty about the concerns as soon as possible
- make a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police without delay

The designated person will be aware of the local statutory Safeguarding network, the role of the Local Safeguarding Board and the existence of local child protection procedures.

The designated person will be aware of the relevant contact numbers and addresses of the statutory agencies in Torbay. If concerns arise, for example, when away on a theatre trip, contact should be made with local agencies whose details will be in the phone directory. Social services departments have an out-of-hours duty team who can be contacted at any time.

Doorstep Arts will ensure that the designated person receives level 3 Training in Child Protection.

Doorstep Art's designated Safeguarding Officers are **Jade Campbell & Erin Walcon** – 07531907183

Who to contact if you have concerns:

Your line-manager or Jade Campbell (Safeguarding Officer)

Where necessary, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will make a referral to the relevant agencies.

- Children's Services (MASH) - 01803 208100
- Emergency Team Out of hours service – 0300 456 4876
- Police - 08452 777444 or 101
- NSPCC Helpline - 0808 800 5000
- Childline - 0800 1111

The arrangements for how different agencies work together to safeguard children has changed. As part of these changes, Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) will be replaced.

Under the new legislation, it is the three safeguarding partners who must make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

The three safeguarding partners are:

- The local authority
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the local authority area

If you feel like you need to talk to another senior individual within Doorstep Arts, please contact the office on 01803 558811.

Prevent Duty

As part of Doorstep Arts' Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures all practitioners, staff and volunteers must be aware of the Prevent Duty knowing how to recognise signs and symptoms of an individual or group potential for radicalisation and should know the procedure for reporting concerns to the designated Safeguarding Officer in the organisation and to know how to contact relevant agencies.

Doorstep Arts recognises and understands that both individual children and young people and groups do *'play out'* reality and current topical subjects. It is therefore even more important that we can recognise the difference between *'playing out'* and potential harm to an individual or group.

Recognising signs and symptoms

A sudden but continuing change in -

- Physical appearance and dress code
- Physical and behavioural attitudes towards others
- Use of inappropriate, discriminatory and offensive language
- Sharing inappropriate images with others
- Becoming withdrawn and secretive
- Missing sessions without explanation
- Talking about what others have said to them in a troubled way
- Encouraging others to use offensive or discriminatory language

For information - the following values are those that underpin the Prevent Duty

British values - democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

The following links offer useful information on the Prevent Duty and associated agencies that are responsible for supporting those who are considered at risk Please familiarise yourself with this information so you are prepared should the need arise to report a concern or an incident.

Information on the Prevent Duty can be found at –

- www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf
- Channel - Advice, guidance, and practical support information can be found at-
- <https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/prevention-and-advice/major-terrorist-incidents/terrorism-extremism/preventing-terrorism-and-extremism/>
- Information and contact details for the Devon MASH team if you have concerns about a Child Protection issue can be found at -
- <https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/child-protection/making-a-mash-enquiry>
- Information and contact details for Devon channel board can be found at-
- http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/devon/p_sg_ch_extremism.html

Child criminal exploitation: County lines

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs, a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

<https://www.ecpat.org.uk/the-national-referral-mechanism>

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead – Jade Campbell & Erin Walcon

- Holds ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and child protection for Doorstep Arts
- Acts as a source of support and expertise in carrying out safeguarding duties for the organisation
- Encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings;
- Is appropriately trained with updates every two years and will refresh their knowledge and skills at regular intervals but at least annually;
- **Will refer a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, to Children’s Services and act as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Referrals should be made inwriting, following a telephone call using the Multi Agency Enquiry Form**

Children Missing Education (CME)

In Torbay a child of statutory school age is considered to be a Child Missing Education (CME) when he/she meets the following criteria:

- Not registered at an educational provision
- Not registered as Elective Home Education
- Has been out of education for more than 20 school days

There are complex reasons why children become missing from education. These may include:

- Victims of Child Sexual Exploitation
- Young offenders
- Children of families who can be highly mobile e.g. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families
- Children from Armed Forces families
- Children of refugees and asylum-seeking families
- Children of new immigrant families
- Children of migrant worker families (who may not be familiar with the education system)
- Children at risk of 'honour'-based violence including forced marriage or female genital mutilation
- Children at risk of modern slavery
- Children from families fleeing domestic violence
- Children living in Women's Refuges
- Young runaways

The pupil must not be removed from roll until the LA has ascertained the pupil's whereabouts and safety and has confirmed that the pupil is registered at another school or is being educated otherwise. The pupil should be marked on the register as having unauthorised absence.

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