

PROTECTION POLICY FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

The Making seeks to safeguard all those who participate in its activities, regardless of age. It is the responsibility of every member of staff and management to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Board of The Making has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Child Protection policy is in place and for reviewing and amending the policy as necessary.

Simon Taylor, Education and Community Outreach Manager (referred to in this policy as the '**designated Child Protection Officer**'), and Zara Hamid, Youth Arts Co-ordinator (referred to in this policy as the '**designated Deputy Child Protection Officer**') are specifically designated as having responsibility for co-ordinating this policy and monitoring its implementation in all areas of project activity. It is their responsibility to act on information given to them by project workers and volunteers.

The designated officers will ensure that all new staff and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are appropriately interviewed (with references) and police checked (CRB) and that they are trained and supported to uphold this policy on the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This Policy complements The Making's Diversity Policy, Health & Safety, CRB and Volunteering policies that also aim to protect all staff, volunteers and project and activity participants.

This Policy breaks down into three parts:

1. Guidance for paid staff and volunteers in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm while they are participating in projects and activities (see page 2).
2. What to do if you suspect any form of abuse is taking place outside of The Making (see page 3).
3. What to do if you suspect any form of abuse by another member of staff or volunteer (see page 5).

1. Guidance for paid staff and volunteers in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm whilst they are participating in The Making's projects and activities.

- A thorough written Risk Assessment of all new activities must be carried out (by the lead project worker with support from the designated officer), and all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure a safe working environment and adequate supervision at all times. A copy of the RA must be supplied to the designated officers.

In addition to the above, project workers and volunteers **must never**

- Smack, hit or physically discipline a child.
- Restraint should never be used except by 'holding' which may be used if there is an immediate danger of personal injury to the child or another person. If it is necessary to restrain a child a written record of this should be made detailing events and reason for restraint being necessary, records should be obtained from witnesses if any. This should then be given to the designated officer.
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Be alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult without someone else being nearby (e.g. in the next room with the door open)
- Travel alone in a car with a child, young person or vulnerable adult (ensure the last two participants are dropped off together)
- Allow or engage in any inappropriate touching
- Allow the use of inappropriate language to go unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments, even in fun
- Allow allegations regarding a child, young person or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature for a child or vulnerable adult that they can do for themselves

If you should accidentally hurt a participant, or if they misunderstand or misinterpret something you have done or said and seem unduly distressed, or if an incident occurs between participants (e.g. a fight); make a written record using the **Protection Disclosure Form** and report the incident to the designated officer as soon as possible. The record should include exactly what happened, or what you saw, what was said and who was there.

All accidents must be recorded in the Accident Book (see Health & Safety policy).

2. What to do if you suspect any form of abuse is taking place outside of The Making:

- **Raise your concerns with the designated officers**
- **Make a written record on a Protection Disclosure Form (see attached)**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working under the auspices of The Making in a paid or voluntary capacity, or those working in affiliated organisations to take responsibility or to decide whether or not abuse is taking place.

However, there is a responsibility to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person.

This responsibility comes from The Children's Act 1989, which states that, *"The community as a whole has a responsibility for the well being of children. This means that all citizens should remain alert to circumstances in which children may be harmed. Individuals can assist the statutory authorities by bringing cases to their attention. Relatives, friends and neighbours of children are particularly well placed to do so, but they must know what to do if they are concerned, in addition to providing support for the family and child, which may include help caring for the child. They must also be confident, because of the difficult and sensitive nature of the situation, that any information they provide will be treated in a confidential way and used only to protect the interests of the child. They should know too that early action on their part is often the best way of helping a family stay together as well as protecting their child."*

The Making also extends this responsibility to include young people and vulnerable adults (for the purposes of child protection legislation the term 'child' refers to anyone up to the age of 18).

The Making's Project Workers and volunteers are in a unique position with children, young people and vulnerable adults. We may be providing a safe haven, and perhaps the only place where they feel comfortable talking. It is therefore possible that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may approach you to talk about abuse.

If you are approached, try to do the following:

- Accept what the child, young person or vulnerable adult says
- Keep calm, do not appear shocked
- Look at the child, young person or vulnerable adult directly
- Let them know that you will need to tell someone else - **DO NOT PROMISE CONFIDENTIALITY**. Reassure them that they were right to tell you
- Never push for information or question the child, young person or vulnerable adult
- Make a written note straight away of exactly what they have said, and record the circumstances or activity that preceded disclosure
- Report the disclosure to the designated officer as soon as possible and fill out a Protection Disclosure Form. This information will then be passed to the Director of The Making (and a copy sent to the Chair of Board of Trustees). If appropriate the matter will then be reported to the relevant child protection agencies.

You can always discuss your concerns in confidence with the designated officers. Do not be afraid to be wrong. **The responsibility is to ensure concerns are reported appropriately, it is not the responsibility of The Making's staff to investigate concerns.**

If any member of staff notices something which concerns them about a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or the child, young person or vulnerable adult has said something to a member of staff; this is the agreed procedure that The Making will follow.

- Everything that has been said by the child, young person or vulnerable adult, or been observed by the member of staff/volunteer will be recorded on a Protection Disclosure Form. The completed records will be kept confidential within a secure location at The Making's offices.
- The information recorded must be factual and not contain assumptions or personal comments by the staff member completing the form.
- We will record the dates and times when these events/situations have happened. Giving the child time to talk and taking care not to interpret what the child's meaning is, recording only what they say.
- If there has been an explanation given to a member of staff for injuries or behaviour, we will ensure that it is included.
- Members of staff or volunteers will immediately raise the contents of the Protection Disclosure Form, in the first instance, with the designated officers. The designated officers will then consult the Social Services. The designated officers and Social Services will then agree on the next course of action.
- All staff and volunteers will receive appropriate training and support to raise awareness of Child Protection issues and issues relating to vulnerable adults, and take away informative literature to support their knowledge.

It is important to note that this is only a process of observation and at no point will staff be actively looking for evidence of abuse, but they will act if they notice or are told anything which gives them cause for concern. **The responsibility is to ensure concerns are reported appropriately, it is not the responsibility of The Making's staff to investigate concerns.**

3. What to do if you suspect any form of abuse by another member of staff or volunteer:

The following circumstances may lead a member of staff or volunteer to suspect that a fellow member of staff or volunteer is abusing a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

- An allegation is made by a child or adult.
- A member of staff notices inappropriate behaviour by another member of staff.

In each case, a Protection Disclosure Form should be completed and the designated officers immediately informed in strict confidence (if the allegations concern either of the designated officers, then the Director should be informed).

The designated officers may be informed of situations where they are unsure if the allegation constitutes abuse or not and they are unclear of what action to take.

There may be circumstances when the allegations are about poor practice.

Social Services will be consulted if there is any doubt and all incidents including poor practice will be recorded and kept on file in a secure location. Access to these files will be strictly limited due to confidentiality and data protection. This is because of the nature of the material and it may be one of a series of instances that cause concern.

If the designated officers conclude that the allegation constitutes poor practice, they will work with the member of staff to ensure adequate training and supervision is given to prevent further incidents. If they conclude that it constitutes abuse they will take advice from the Director of The Making and formal disciplinary and criminal procedures will be instituted.

The Making's management team assures all staff and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith (without malicious intent), reports his / her concerns about the possibility that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be being abused.

Updated January 2008

Signed:

Position:

Policy Review date: January 2009

Attached appendix 1 - Protection Disclosure Form

Protection Disclosure Form continuation sheet

Description of Incident, Details of report given or Observation:
(N.B. the information given below must be factual and not contain assumptions or personal comments)

Signed:

Name:

Position:

Date:

When completed please give a copy of this form to one of The Making's designated Child Protection Officers.