

ARTSPOKES

ARTSPOKES SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

Artspokes recognises that children have the right to be safe, secure and free from threat. The welfare of the child is paramount.

Artspokes will provide an environment that ensures children are safe from potential abuse, and will respond to any suspicion of potential abuse in a way that respects the child's dignity and reinforces the adult's responsibility to the child.

Statement of principles

Artspokes will:

- Treat children as individuals entitled to dignity and respect.
- Promote effective partnerships amongst all those involved with children, including children's parents or carers, to improve children's welfare.
- Promote the safety of children.
- Raise awareness of best practice in how to protect children from harm of all kinds.
- Minimise risks to children so that they do not suffer harm.
- Make safety the responsibility of everyone at Artspokes whose work brings them into contact with children.
- Establish effective and open procedures in responding to accidents, complaints or concerns so that they can be shared and dealt with promptly.
- Adopt and apply safe recruitment practices for all artists and volunteers.
- Ensure that any artist working with Artspokes has public liability insurance.

Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Volunteers

To reduce the risk of abuse by staff and volunteers Artspokes will:

- Ensure that all adults working (voluntary or paid) with Artspokes who have contact with children have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check unless they are related to one of the children participating in the project
- All new projects undertaken by Artspokes consider issues relating to child protection and ensure that all adults involved are informed about the issues involved. This will help them recognise and respond to suspected abuse of children whether physical, emotional, sexual or as a result of neglect.
- It is important that CRB checked staff do not take non-checked people with them to meetings or places where they may come into contact with children or vulnerable adults.
- Never allow an adult who is not CRB to be alone with a child for example by going to the toilet or supervising children in a separate room.
- Ensure that Young Volunteers (under 18) are informed about Child Protection. Young Volunteers do not need to have a CRB. Preferably they will be related to a child participating in the project, or a close friend of a relative. They will be taken on at the discretion of the organizer and will be supervised as a young person and given suitable responsibilities.

Sarah Hammond Art Director

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Reporting and recording concerns

Staff and volunteers involved with Artspokes are required to promptly pass on any concerns about possible child abuse or concerns about the welfare and safety of a child to the Designated Person for Child Protection in Artspokes. The Designated Person for Child Protection is Sarah Hammond, 3G Fieldgate Mansions, Myrdle St, London E1 1EY – 07711 534 099 email: admin@artspokes.com

The Designated Person needs to make a judgement as to whether the allegation or concerns need to be passed on to the authorities or be discussed with the parents/carers first. If staff and volunteers receive an allegation of abuse against another member of staff or volunteer they should promptly inform the Designated Person.

It is essential that the staff member or volunteer records what they have seen or heard that has led them to believe that a child's welfare or safety is at risk. The Designated Person also needs to keep clear and concise records. Records need to be kept of action taken and why that action was decided upon.

Staff or volunteers should bear in mind that it is not their job to investigate an allegation.

Records should include the following details:

- Name of the child
- Parent's or carer's details
- The child's address
- Relevant telephone numbers
- What is said to have happened or what was seen
- When it occurred
- Who else was there
- What was said by those involved
- Whether there is any actual evidence e.g. bruises, bleeding, change in behaviour
- Who has been told about it
- Who was concerned
- Was the child able to say what happened
- Whether the parents have been advised
- Sign and date the record ensuring it is legible and written in black ink
- This must be stored in a locked filing cabinet
- When an incident /event is reported it is paramount that the exact words that the child has used are noted. It is imperative that this information is recorded immediately and that the exact wordings are noted.

All information about concerns regarding the welfare of a child needs to be kept confidential and should only be passed on to other staff members/ volunteers if it is essential for them to know.

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Supervision of Children

Artspokes recognises that the safety of children should be of paramount concern at all times. They will:

- Plan appropriate activities
- Supervise and know where children at all times (indoors and outside)
- Ensure there are sufficient people for the activity
- Clarify the responsibilities of the adults and make sure they work in pairs

Supervision of Staff or volunteers

It is important that staff and volunteers do not engage in behaviour that could be misinterpreted. They need to be aware of the boundaries, to be open in the way they deal with children, and to know they can pass on any concerns. They should not be alone with children. They should:

- Avoid situations where a child is completely unobserved
- Not spend excessive amounts of time alone with a child
- Not take children on a car journey alone however short
- Not take children to their home
- Not engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay
- Not allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Not allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Not make sexually suggestive comments to a child even in fun
- Not allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Not do things of a personal nature for a child which they can do themselves
- If a member of staff or a volunteer should accidentally hurt a child, or if a child seems distressed in any manner or misunderstands or misinterprets something a member of staff and volunteer has done then the incident should be reported as soon as possible to another colleague (*Designated Person*) and a brief written note made. Parents or carers should then be informed of the incident.

Artspokes is specifically responsible for ensuring that Child Protection is accorded the necessary status by making sure all members of staff and volunteers working with children follow this Policy.

Signed by SARAH HAMMOND

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DIRECTOR

23rd May 2012