

Safeguarding Procedures

Introduction

These procedures outline the steps that must be taken if there are any concerns about a child's, young or vulnerable person's safety and wellbeing.

Purpose and aim of the procedure

This procedure applies to everyone who comes into contact with children, young or vulnerable people, even if it is not your main role in your organisation.

Principles

The welfare of the children and vulnerable adults using the NAC facilities is paramount.

All participants whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse

All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously; and responded to swiftly and appropriately

Anyone aged 18 years or under should be considered as a child for the purposes of this document.

Working in partnership with children and their parents/carers is essential for the protection of the children.

All statements in this procedure relating to a child, or children, shall apply equally to young, elderly or otherwise vulnerable persons.

Summary of useful information

If you have any concern about the welfare of an individual, or you experience, observe, or suspect any abuse; in the first instance, please contact the NAC nominated Child Protection Lead (currently Sue Case) on 07952 607697 – or if not available the Administration Officer (currently Wendy Storey) on 07766 856365.

A copy of the NAC Safeguarding Policy and these Procedures are held at both the Front Street and Gibson Street premises in the respective filing cabinets.

Clear instructions

If someone is concerned about a child's (or vulnerable person's) welfare they should tell the nominated Child Protection Lead (Sue Case) or their deputy. Any concerns must be kept confidential and should not be discussed with anyone other than the Child Protection Lead,

who should (if deemed appropriate) make a referral to children's services or other appropriate organisation (police, social services or regulators, as necessary). Reporting concerns helps children's and other services build an overall picture of the child's life and the support they, or their family, may need.

If a child tells you they are experiencing abuse, it is important to reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you. Make sure they know that abuse is never their fault. Never promise a child that you will keep the things they're telling you a secret. Explain that you need to share what they've told you with someone who will be able to help.

Indications That a Child or Vulnerable Adult is Being Abused

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- Someone else—a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of another child
- Unexplained changes in behaviour—e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engages in sexually explicit behaviour in games
- Is distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship will normally be expected
- Has difficulty in making friends
- Is prevented from socialising with other children
- Displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
- Loses weight for no apparent reason
- Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.

Listening to the Child or Vulnerable Adult

If a child says or indicates that he or she is being abused, or information is obtained which gives concern that a child is being abused, the person receiving this information should:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Tell the child they are not to blame and that it was right to tell someone
- Take what the child says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child who is very young, has a speech disability and/or differences in language
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum necessary to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said
- Reassure the child, but do not make promises of confidentiality which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
- Make a full record of what had been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible and inform the Child Protection Lead.

What information to record

As soon as possible after the event, the reporter (supported by the Child Protection Lead) shall record in the Safeguarding log (filed in the relevant filing cabinet) as comprehensive a description of the event, the circumstances and the consequences.

The report should include, but not be limited to:

- The nature of the allegation
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- The child's account, if he or she can give them, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred
- Any times, dates, or other relevant information
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion, or hearsay

Contact details

NAC nominated Child Protection Lead (currently Sue Case) on 078 58 447 090

Alternatively, contact the main NAC numbers on 01670 708269 or 077 66 856 365 or info@newbigginartscentre.org

Confidentiality

Information shall only be shared with people who need to know. But individuals should be aware that, in certain circumstances, information must be made available to the authorities (police, social services or regulators, as necessary), even if the subject asks to withhold the information.

Procedures are clear and accessible

All Trustees and volunteers will be made aware of the policy and procedures as part of NAC induction processes and training. These individuals should make every reasonable effort also to propagate these documents to our clientele.

Safeguarding Procedures Version 2b

Approved on behalf of Newbiggin Arts Centre by;



Steve R Wilkinson

Chair of Board of Trustees

2nd June 2024