



Safeguarding Policy

Document Control

Version	Approved by/date	Next review due
1	Board 16/01/2019	Jan 2020
1.1	Board Sept 2021	Sept 22
1.2	Board: 10 th Jan 2023	Jan 2024
1.3	Board: 8 th Feb 2024	February 2025
1.4	Board: 30 th January 2025	January 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bedford Creative Arts (BCA) is a charity that provides creative activities, in a multiple of physical and online forms, for the benefit of the general public. We acknowledge that our work will engage vulnerable people from time to time whether they be children and young people or vulnerable adults. We also acknowledge that anyone can become vulnerable at any time, and everyone has the right to be kept safe from harm.

This detailed policy with procedures for handling safeguarding clarifies both our legal and organisational commitment to keeping people safe from the risk of abuse or neglect and outlines the tools that enable our representatives to have sufficient information and confidence in how to handle concerns and behave appropriately.

Everyone who is a representative of BCA is required to read, understand and follow this policy and procedures including staff, trustees, volunteers, contractors and artists.

If you are a representative of BCA, obliged to follow this policy, you need to understand:

- That you must NOT behave in a way that harms anyone else and that we will appoint our representatives in a way that aims to ensure you do not have a record of having harmed people previously or shown any indication that you might do this in future (these are our Safer Recruitment practises and include references, employment checks and DBS checks).
- That you MUST at all times behave in a way that protects others from the risk of abuse and neglect, behaving appropriately in line with this policy guidance. If you are found not to have done so, you will risk action under our Disciplinary, Complaints, Performance policies or those penalties outlined in your contract.
- That you MUST take immediate action to report any concerns you have about things that you witness whilst representing BCA that make you suspect neglect or abuse.

We ask all of our representatives to:

- Make sure that they recognise and understand the signs of abuse and neglect. This policy outlines many of these. Staff and long-term contractors will be giving full Safeguarding Training but anyone who does not feel confident in understanding how to recognise abuse and neglect must request training.
- Make sure that they understand how to report a concern. Details of how to do this are outlined in this document and summarised briefly below.
- Take action to request immediate advice and clarification if you have any questions or concerns about how to operate this policy, by speaking to a member of BCA staff or the Director who is the BCA designated safeguarding officer.

If you suspect abuse or neglect, follow any protocols given to you by the project manager for the event or activity that you are engaged with. If you have not received any:

- Write down details of alleged abuse and individual's details (see Appendix C)
- If there is an immediate risk of harm, contact the relevant emergency services (Police/Ambulance) on **999**, otherwise:
- WITHIN 24 HOURS contact the Designated Person who will contact the Local Safeguarding Lead: Elaine Midgeley, Director, elainem@bedfordcreativearts.org.uk or 07967 045984.
- If you cannot reach the Designated Person, contact the Local Safeguarding Leads directly. Details are in Appendix D.

CONTENTS

SECTION	Page
Contents	2
Purpose	3
Policy Statement	3
Scope	4
Policy Guidance	4
Definitions of Abuse	5
Working with Vulnerable People	6
Recruitment, Supervision & Training	7
Alerting or Raising a Concern	8
Dealing with an Incident or Disclosure	8
What to do if Abuse is Suspected	9
Once Abuse Has Been Identified	10
Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers	10
Compliance	10
Responsibilities	11
Review	11
Other Relevant Policies	11
Legal Framework	11
Local Safeguarding Boards	12

APPENDICES		
A	Recognising Types of Abuse	13
B	Working with Children – Dos and Don'ts	22
C	Safeguarding Form for Recording Alleged Abuse	24
D	Reporting Abuse Protocol	26

Safeguarding Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Set out Bedford Creative Arts' commitment to the protection of all vulnerable and at-risk adults, children and young people who we work with, *and to*
- Provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt if they suspect a vulnerable person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

2. Policy Statement

Bedford Creative Arts believes that it is always unacceptable for anyone to experience or be threatened by the possibility of abuse of any kind and recognises our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all people at risk, by a commitment to practice which protects them. As such the organisation is committed to ensuring:

- the welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount;
- children and adults at risk are protected from maltreatment;
- all children and adults at risk, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, beliefs or any other protected characteristic;
- all concerns, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by trustees, staff, contractors and volunteers (hereafter 'representatives') and responded to appropriately - this may require a referral to the Local Authority Referral Centre, and in emergencies, the Police;
- our recruitment processes are safe and include appropriate selection and vetting when required;
- all associated company policies and procedures adhere to the guidance and principals of this policy e.g. with regards to health and safety, photography etc.
- all activities and events delivered by Bedford Creative Arts that involve children, young people and adults at risk are properly risk assessed and measures are put in place to appropriately minimise or remove any risk identified.

Safeguarding is about protecting the safety, independence and wellbeing of people at risk. It covers abuse and neglect, accidents, crime and bullying.

The organisation's procedures are a means of alerting representatives to their responsibilities and ensuring that any concerns are addressed promptly and appropriately in accordance with local and national protocols. This Policy is based on the principle that:

It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not neglect and abuse is occurring, but it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and do something about it.

Bedford Creative Arts expects and supports any representatives to report any suspected incidents of abuse or neglect in whatever form.

The Bedford Creative Arts management team assures all representatives that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith (without malicious intent), reports a safeguarding concern. This Policy has been written in line with guidance from Community Voluntary Service Bedford, due regard to the Local Safeguarding Boards for Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire, and should be read in conjunction with other relevant Bedford Creative Arts' policies set out at the end of this document. It is not intended that anything in this Policy affects an individual's statutory rights.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, the Board of Trustees, volunteers, artists, contractors, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Bedford Creative Arts.

This policy relates to children, young people and adults at risk.

- Children and young people are considered anyone under the age of 18.
- Adults at risk (sometimes referred to as vulnerable adults) are considered anyone over the age of 18 who may be unable to protect themselves from abuse, harm or exploitation which may be because of mental disability, other disability or impairment, age or illness.

4. Policy Guidance

The Board of Trustees delegate responsibility to the Director to develop such further policies or procedures as may be required to ensure full implementation of this policy.

It is the intention of Bedford Creative Arts' Trustees that the following principles, approach, aims and objectives are observed:

We will seek to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults by:

- Appointing a named '**Designated Person**' who can support and advise staff on how to report safeguarding concerns (currently the **Director**);
- Ensuring that the designated person is appropriately trained and has links with local statutory protection agencies;
- Valuing children, young people and adults at risk, listening to and respecting them;
- Adopting safeguarding guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff, contractors and volunteers;
- Recruiting staff, contractors and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made and that all staff and volunteers who work directly and regularly with vulnerable people have appropriate clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, carers, families, staff, contractors and volunteers;
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents, children and vulnerable adults appropriately;

- Providing effective management for staff, contractors and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

5. Definitions of abuse

“Abuse is the violation of an individual’s human rights by another person or persons”

European Convention of Human rights

All of us have the right to:

- Live free from violence, fear and abuse
- Be free from harm and exploitation
- Independence (which may include a degree of risk)

There are various types of abuse including:

- ♦ Physical
- ♦ Neglect & Self-Neglect
- ♦ Emotional (Psychological)
- ♦ Sexual
- ♦ Organisational (Institutional)
- ♦ Discriminatory
- ♦ Financial, economic or material
- ♦ Cyber
- ♦ Domestic violence and abuse
- ♦ Modern Slavery
- ♦ Radicalisation

The abuse can vary from treating someone with disrespect in a way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical suffering:

- Either deliberate or be the result of ignorance, or lack of training, knowledge or understanding.
- Take place in any setting, public or private, including online and can be perpetuated by anyone.
- Abuse can take different forms, and a child or vulnerable adult may suffer from more than one form at a time.
 - Most children/young people who are abused know their abusers.

A full list of definitions of the different types of abuse is contained in Appendix A. Please note that no list is truly exhaustive and abuse can take many forms.

6. Working with vulnerable people

Representatives working with vulnerable people should always remember that while you are caring for other people's children or working with vulnerable adults you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them, and the organisation, must be uppermost in your mind at all times.

Representatives working with vulnerable adults should ensure that risks have been assessed and understood and that where relevant emergency contact details are held, see 6.3 below.

Further guidance for staff working with children outside a school/institution setting is given at **Appendix B** which does not form part of the core Policy and may be updated from time to time.

6.1. Social Media

Representatives should treat contact via social media with caution and in particular should not 'friend' children, young people and vulnerable adults who participate in our programmes. Refer to our [Social Media Policy](#).

6.2. Working Online & Digital Content

Virtual meetings and digital activities should be risk assessed to ensure that vulnerable people are protected and that all activity complies with our [Digital Policy](#) which provides specific guidance when using things such as instant messaging services, video conferencing software and virtual workspaces. Everyone has the right to be protected from harmful online content under the Online Safety Act 2023. Digital content should be risk assessed to ensure it does not represent harm and users must have the ability to report and complain about harmful content to BCA in line with our [Feedback & Complaints Policy](#).

6.3. Code of Behaviour

Trustees, staff, volunteers and contractors are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner at all times and not put themselves at risk of an allegation of abuse through inconsiderate or inappropriate behaviour.

Examples of inappropriate behaviour include using inappropriate comments at work, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role or responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.

For example, you are expected to carefully consider the use of physical contact, perhaps in the case of consoling someone. Make sure that your actions are:

1. Minimal
2. Understood and welcomed by the person receiving the contact
3. Meeting the needs of the person (not your needs)
4. Open to the scrutiny of those around you.

Staff are required to consider ways to protect and promote the safety of children, young people and adults at risk in all of their work activity.

6.4. Assessing Risk

Safeguarding risk is assessed strategically by the Director and the Board of Trustees regularly through the Corporate Risk Register.

Relevant projects of the organisation will have a separate risk assessment that will consider in detail safeguarding risk e.g. events or new programmes of work.

This process enables risks that could lead to abuse or neglect of people at risk to be identified and appropriate procedures to be put into place relating to each project that enable adequate mitigation.

7. Recruitment, Supervision & Training

Bedford Creative Arts practices safe recruitment to ensure that any employees, volunteers or contractors maintain high standards of welfare for children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Unless specifically stated in their job description as a requirement, no employee, volunteer or trustee will have regular and unsupervised access to children, young people and adults at risk.

7.1. Recruitment

Any employee, volunteer or trustee of Bedford Creative Arts appointed in a role which will have direct, regular and unsupervised access to children, young people or adults at risk will be selected through a process designed to ensure the suitability of the appointment is assessed and necessary vetting procedures completed before an individual is appointed.

This should include:

- The application process will reference Bedford Creative Arts' commitment to safeguarding in the Job Description and any other relevant application documentation;
- thorough checks should be made of an applicant's identity, work history and references including any gaps in time served in employment. This may include making online searches and the applicant must be forewarned of this;
- Proof of qualifications should be obtained;
- An enhanced check undertaken through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), if required if their work activity is considered Regulated Activity;
- A probationary period and supervision of the person should take place;
- References should be obtained and verified.

7.2. Supervision and Training

All employees, volunteers and trustees will be made aware of this policy and provided with an opportunity to find out more about their roles and responsibilities for child, young person and adult protection.

Those employees, volunteers and trustees who work in areas of responsibility where there is access to children, young people and adults at risk will be provided with appropriate training or will be required to evidence recent training. Regular supervision of their work will be undertaken to ensure that they follow best practise.

7.3. Artists and Contractors

Artists and contractors appointed to work for Bedford Creative Arts in an environment where they will have unsupervised access to children, young people and vulnerable adults will have their suitability for the role assessed. This will include securing copies of their evidence of an Enhanced DBS Check and copies of their policies for Safeguarding will be examined to ensure that they evidence a robust and legally compliant approach. They will be expected to demonstrate appropriate experience and/or training of safeguarding and working with vulnerable people and will be provided with this Policy & Procedures on appointment.

8. Alerting or Raising a Concern:

Alerting is a necessary first stage in the process of keeping people safe and empowering them for the future. Alerting through formal channels will enable a proper assessment and investigation to be carried forward. Our role is to:

- Recognise signs of abuse
- Respond to disclosures
- Stepping in, where appropriate, to protect a person at risk and to preserve evidence in the aftermath of an incident
- Recognise bad practice
- Report a concern, disclosure or allegation
- Collate and record initial information
- Work in accordance with anti-discriminatory practice
- Maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a person, staff members should always act in the interest of the individual
- Always ask the question "what if I'm right" not "what if I'm wrong" when suspicious of abuse

As an alerter, representatives are not being asked to verify or prove that information is true, but to log concerns and report them to the appropriate authorities. The Police have responsibility for deciding whether a matter should be investigated as a potential criminal offence.

9. Dealing with an Incident or Disclosure

If someone discloses information to you alleging abuse or neglect:

- Remain calm
- Make sure the individual is safe
- If necessary, call emergency services

- Let them know that you will need to inform someone else about the situation. Explain that you must inform your designated person (Director) who will contact the Safeguarding Team. Assure them that any information disclosed will only be shared with those who need to know. **Do not promise confidentiality**
- Where possible and appropriate seek consent from the individual or from a parent/carer before sharing information
- Listen carefully to what they tell you
- Make accurate notes using the person's own words
- Offer support and reassurance
- Make it clear that you believe what they are telling you
- Allow them to tell you as much as they want to but do not force them
- Tell them they have done the right thing in telling you
- Tell them what you will do next

DO NOT:

- Ignore or disbelieve the allegation
- Be judgemental or voice your own opinion
- Press the person for more details
- Ask leading questions
- Disturb/destroy potential evidence (e.g. clean a person or area involved)
- Promise to keep secrets
- Contact the alleged abuser
- Elaborate in your notes
- Investigate yourself – the police will decide whether a criminal offence has occurred
- Panic

Following any allegations:

Immediately contact your designated person (Director). They will decide whether or not to refer the matter **If the Designated Person (Director) is unavailable and you have concerns that a person is at significant risk of harm, you should follow the reporting protocol in Appendix C.**

- Make written notes as soon as possible, recording exactly what was said, when and where and recording any possible signs of physical abuse that you may have seen (e.g. bruises or burns on arms or face)
- Take care to record ONLY what you were told. Do not speculate or include opinion. The template at **Appendix C** is provided for guidance

10. What to do if Abuse or Neglect is Suspected

If you suspect someone is suffering any form of abuse/neglect or is at risk of abuse/neglect you have a duty of care to inform the Designated Person and discuss your concerns.

It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not abuse has taken place.

11. Once Abuse Has Been Identified

The **Designated Person** will treat any suspected cases of abuse with the utmost seriousness and make a formal disclosure to the relevant authority, as set out in local protocols attached at **Appendix C** and any work instructions. (These do not form part of the policy and may be updated independently from time to time).

Action to protect someone at risk should never be delayed. Once identified you must not leave the matter unreported and must report within 24 hours.

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only.

12. Allegations Against Staff, Contractors or Volunteers

Bedford Creative Arts will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports their concern that a colleague is or may be abusing someone.

Where a complaint is made against a member of staff, representative or volunteer, the designated person will take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be a risk.

There will be an investigation, which may be one or more of the following:

- Criminal investigation (external agency/police)
- Safeguarding investigation (external agency)
- A disciplinary investigation (internal process) and where appropriate, suspension of the employee or volunteer pending the outcome of further investigations. External contractors may have their contracts terminated.

If we dismiss or remove a person from our organisation (or may have done so had they not left), because they have harmed or posed a risk of harm to a vulnerable person, we will ensure we comply with our Legal duty to refer the person to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Board Safeguarding & Risk Champion should be informed immediately of any such concerns.

13. Compliance

Bedford Creative Arts takes the issue of safeguarding children, young people & vulnerable adults seriously. Failure on the part of any Bedford Creative Arts representative to comply with this policy will result in an internal investigation and possible dismissal following the disciplinary process.

14. Responsibilities

The *Board of Trustees* are responsible for ensuring Bedford Creative Arts has a legally compliant Safeguarding Policy in place and that it is reviewed regularly.

The *Director* is the 'designated person' and has responsibility for ensuring the maintenance, regular review and updating of this policy and for ensuring that clear procedures and guidance supporting the application of this policy are in place, available to all staff and regularly reviewed. They are responsible for logging and reporting concerns internally and externally and maintaining training of staff.

Managers have responsibility for ensuring that all volunteers or commissioned artists & contractors or others working on Bedford Creative Arts projects are aware of their responsibilities under this policy.

All those persons referred to within the Scope of this policy are required to adhere to its procedures and requirements.

15. Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed 12 months after the date shown on the front page or when necessary following changes in legislation or another relevant event.

16. Other Relevant Policies

- Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Information Governance Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Digital Policy
- Feedback & Complaints Policy

17. Legal Framework

- Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Human Right Act 1998
- Children and Young Persons Act 1933
- Education Act 2002
- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998

- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (framework for whistle blowing)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- The Care Act 2014 and guidance
- Domestic Violence, Crime & Victims Act 2004
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Housing Act 1996
- No More Secrets 2000
- Online Safety Act 2023

HM Government Guidance document: 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused Advice for practitioners': DES, 2006

http://www.centralbedfordshirelscb.org/assets/1/what_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused-1.pdf

18. Local Safeguarding Boards

These are responsible for:

- Policy and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children or vulnerable adults in a local authority area
- Training
- Investigating allegations concerning people working with vulnerable groups
- Monitoring the effectiveness of safeguarding services
- Carrying out serious case reviews where people have been seriously injured or died.

Bedford Creative Arts generally works in the catchment for the Local Safeguarding Board for Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire and this Policy has been written to include guidance on their reporting procedures. However, where Bedford Creative Arts may be operating in other areas the organisation will make every effort to report concerns to the relevant Local Safeguarding Board for that area, or otherwise the Police.

Appendix A

Recognising Types of Abuse

1. Physical abuse

Physical Abuse is when a person hurts another person and can occur even if there was *no intention* to harm the individual. Examples are:

- ◆ Smacking, hitting, kicking, shaking, slapping, scratching
- ◆ Beating by hand or with an object
- ◆ Pinching, cutting, burning
- ◆ Physical punishment or force with intent of inflicting pain
- ◆ Pushing or rough handling
- ◆ Inappropriate restraint or sanctions
- ◆ Force feeding
- ◆ Misuse of medicine

Signs/symptoms:

- *Injuries on unusual sites*
- *Burns or scalds with clear outlines or uniform depth*
- *Injuries that are the shape of objects*
- *Presence of several injuries or scars of a variety of ages*
- *Injuries - no medical attention*
- *Skin infections*
- *Dehydration*
- *Unexplained weight changes*
- *Medication being 'lost'*
- *Fear of someone*

2. Emotional abuse

Emotional Abuse is when someone behaves in a way that is likely to seriously affect another's emotional development and can include:

- ◆ Verbal abuse - constant name-calling, criticism or being sworn at
- ◆ Harassment
- ◆ Intimidation by word or deed - being threatened or made to feel frightened

- ◆ Threats of harm or abandonment or exclusion from services
- ◆ Being made fun of or humiliated
- ◆ Excessive criticism - belittling, telling a child they are worthless or no good
- ◆ Witnessing violence or abuse of others
- ◆ Blaming
- ◆ Controlling
- ◆ Coercion
- ◆ Isolation or withdrawal from services/support networks
- ◆ Denial of religious or cultural needs
- ◆ Cyber bullying

Signs/symptoms:

- *Difficulty gaining access to the adult on their own*
- *Not attending appointments*
- *Low self esteem*
- *Lack of confidence and anxiety*
- *Increased levels of confusion*
- *Increased urinary or faecal incontinence*
- *Sleep disturbance*
- *Person feeling/acting as if they are being watched all the time*
- *Decreased ability to communicate*
- *Language being used that is not usual for the person*
- *Deference/submission to the alleged person causing harm*
- *Failure to grow or thrive*
- *Compulsive nervous*
- *Unwillingness to play (in children)*

3. Sexual abuse

Sexual Abuse is when a child takes part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening or an adult is engaged in sexual activities against their will. These activities include:

- ◆ Being forced or lured in any sexual activity or being forced to witness
- ◆ Unwanted physical and sexual contact - inappropriate touching or being touched in a way that makes the person uncomfortable
- ◆ Encouragement to behave in sexual ways inappropriate to their age

- ◆ Exposure to pornography or use in production of sexual material
- ◆ Rape
- ◆ Indecent exposure
- ◆ Sexual harassment
- ◆ Displaying pornographic literature or videos
- ◆ Gross indecency
- ◆ Being forced or coerced to be photographed or videoed to allow others to look at their body
- ◆ Sexual innuendo
- ◆ Any sexual activity involving staff

Signs/symptoms:

- *Sexually transmitted diseases or pregnancy*
- *Soreness in genital / anal areas*
- *Signs that someone is trying to take control of their body image*
- *Sexualised behaviour or language*
- *Oral infections*
- *A child demonstrating knowledge of sexual practises e.g. through play/language*
- *The signs that a person may be experiencing sexual abuse and emotional abuse are often very similar. This is due to the emotional impact of sexual abuse on a person's sense of identity and to the degree of manipulation that may be carried out in 'grooming'*

4. Neglect and Self neglect

Neglect is the persistent lack of appropriate care, including love, stimulation, safety and nourishment, all of which can have a serious effect on physical, mental and emotional development.

- ◆ Basic needs not met
- ◆ Deprivation of food, clothing, medical attention, necessities of life such as heating, or aids for functional independence
- ◆ Inadequate care
- ◆ Denial of basic right to make informed choices
- ◆ Failure to provide access to social, health or educational services
- ◆ Failure to give privacy and dignity
- ◆ Ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs

Signs/symptoms:

- *Malnutrition*

- *Rapid/continuous weight loss*
- *Inappropriate clothing*
- *Untreated medical problems*
- *Dirty clothing/bedding*
- *Lack of personal care*
- *Unsupervised in situations where there are possible dangers*
- *Squalid living conditions*
- *If neglect is due to a carer being overstretched or under-resourced the carer may seem very tired, anxious or apathetic*

Self-neglect in adults covers a wide range of types of behaviour:

- neglect of self
- neglect of the domestic environment including hoarding
- risky lifestyle behaviour
- may also pose a risk to others

Causes may include:

- physical problems
- mental health problems
- personality
- history of trauma
- substance misuse
- lack of social networks
- isolation and old age
- multiple factors may exist

NB. The vulnerable adult may have:

- *pride in self sufficiency*
- *a sense of connectedness to place and possessions*
- *a drive to preserve continuity of identity and control*
- *traumatic life histories and events that have had life changing effects*

5. Cyber abuse

Abuse can be perpetrated using information and communication technologies such as mobile phones or the internet to support deliberate, repeated, hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others (tease, harass, threaten or embarrass):

- May involve sexual abuse or grooming
- Can take place on the internet and through the misuse of email
- Can include the use of social networking sites, chat rooms etc.

The internet can be used for a range of purposes relating to harassment:

- *To locate personal information about a victim*
- *To communicate with the victim*
- *As a means of surveillance of the victim*
- *Identity theft*
- *Damaging the reputation of the victim*
- *Electronic sabotage such as spamming and sending viruses*
- *Tricking other internet users into harassing or threatening a victim*

6. Child Sexual Exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse.

It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity:

- (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) and/or
- (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator
- (c) both girls and boys are at risk

Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups.

What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim, which increases as the exploitative relationship develops.

Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyber bullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

CSE exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology.

Possible signs include:

- *Noticeable changes in behaviour*
- *Becoming secretive, defensive or aggressive when asked about their personal life*
- *Wearing clothing that is too adult or revealing for their age*
- *Frequently staying out late or overnight with no explanation as to where they have been*
- *Going places that you know they cannot afford*
- *Suddenly acquiring expensive gifts such as mobile phones, jewellery – even drugs – and not being able to explain how they came by them*
- *Repeated truanting*
- *Getting into trouble with the police*

- *Bruises, marks on the body, sexually-transmitted diseases, pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse or self-harm*
- *Repeated phone calls, letters, emails from adults outside family social circle*
- *Strangers hanging about outside*
- *Young people getting into cars with adults that are unknown to them*
- *Associating with other young people known to be victims of sexual exploitation*
- *Friends at school express concern for them*

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):

This refers to the removal of part or all the female genitalia for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons.

It's against the law in the UK and any incidences must be reported to the police.

Staff need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person.

Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practice FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

Honour Based Violence:

committed against someone who is perceived to have brought shame or dishonour on a family or even a community. Incidents that have preceded honour killings have included:

- Pressure to go abroad and forced marriage
- The individual being detained within the home
- Denial of access to the telephone, internet, passport and friends

Forced Marriages:

- Absence from a school, day centre or other regular activity
- Fear about forthcoming visits to their country of origin
- Not allowed to attend activities
- Surveillance by family members especially siblings

Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on the NSPCC website: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>

7. Radicalisation

The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. The internet and the use of social media has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

- The Counter -Terrorism and Security Act which received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015, places a duty on local authorities and other children's service providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into Terrorism ("the Prevent duty")
- As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Home Office Prevent Programme (prevent@bedfordshirepnn.police.uk).

The Department for Education has a helpline for anyone concerned about a child who may be at risk of extremism, or about extremism within an organisation working with children and young people.

Email: counter.extremism@education.gov.uk Telephone: 020 7340 7264

8. Organisational Abuse

The culture and regime of the organisation leads to individuals being neglected, mistreated, denied choice, or excluded:

Contributory factors may include:

- ♦ Weak or oppressive management
- ♦ Inadequate staffing (numbers, competence)
- ♦ Inadequate staff and volunteers' supervision or support
- ♦ Closed communication channels
- ♦ Insufficient training
- ♦ Rigid routines

Examples of organisational abuse:

- Repeated instances of poor care may be an indication of more serious problems
- Neglect and poor professional practice leading to other forms of abuse as defined above
- Misuse of staff power to harm adults in their care
- Staff and volunteers not reporting or not challenging bad practice

Signs/Symptoms:

- *over-medicating people*
- *lack of social / leisure activities*
- *lack of personal clothing and possessions*
- *deprived environment and lack of stimulation*
- *people referred to or spoken to with disrespect*
- *inappropriate physical interventions*
- *unsafe environments*
- *absence of effective care plans and risk assessments*

9. Discriminatory Abuse

- Treating a person or group less favourably than others based on their race, gender, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion

- Slurs, harassment, name calling
- Breaches in civil liberties
- Unequal health or social care
- Hate incidents and hate crime

Signs/Symptoms:

- *Person overly concerned about race, sexual preference etc.*
- *Tries to be more like others*
- *Reacts angrily if any attention is paid to race, sex etc.*
- *Carer overly critical/anxious about these areas*
- *Disparaging remarks made*
- *Person made to dress differently*
- *An older person being acutely aware of age or 'being a burden'*

10. Financial, economic or material Abuse

- An aspect of coercive control
- A Perpetrator using or mis-using money or possessions to limit or control the victim's actions and freedom of choice.
- Theft / fraud
- Exploitation
- Pressure in connection with will changing, property ownership, inheritance
- Internet scamming
- Misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- Putting contractual obligations in the victim's name
-

Signs/Symptoms:

- *change in material circumstances*
- *unpaid bills*
- *unexplained loss of assets*
- *inappropriate financial transactions*
- *visitors who coincide with cashing of benefits*
- *lack of food*
- *person who is managing the finances overly concerned with money*
- *sense that the person is being tolerated in the house due to the income they bring in, person not included in the activities the rest of the family enjoys*

11. Domestic Abuse

An intimate partner or family member:

- tries to stop contact with friends or family
- prevents them from going to work/college
- constantly checks up or follows them
- accuses them unjustly of flirting/having affairs
- constantly belittles or humiliates them

- regularly criticises/insults them in front of others
- deliberately destroys their possessions
- hurts or threatens them or their children
- keeps them short of money or essential items
- forces them to do something they didn't want to do

12. Modern Slavery

Forced labour and domestic servitude

Human trafficking

(recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring or receiving a person through use of force, coercion or other means for the purpose of exploiting them).

Signs/Symptoms:

- *show signs of abuse, look malnourished or unkempt*
- *seem under the control or influence of others*
- *be living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation*
- *have no ID documents, few personal possessions*

13. Other Causes for Concern

Hate Crime, Mate Crime and Disability Related Harassment

- any crime or incident where the perpetrator's hostility or prejudice towards an identifiable group of people (race, religion, disability, transgender or sexual orientation) is a factor in determining who is victimised.
- abuse may occur as a result of the accumulation or escalation of minor hate incidents.
- subject to safeguarding procedures if the hate incident is directed at a person with care and support needs.

Mate Crime is defined as whereby a perpetrator befriends a vulnerable individual before committing a crime.

Appendix B

Working with Children – Dos and Don'ts

DO:

- ♦ Ensure a minimum ration of 5 children to 1 adult in activities and a minimum of 2 staff/representatives present at all times.
- ♦ Promote the message that parents should accompany their children to our activities wherever possible and include relevant disclaimer notices at events and in event publicity that clarify that the children remain the responsibility of their parents/carers unless we have designed the event with sufficient measures in place to enable children to be left,
- ♦ Provide a clear registration process to track attendees and aim to complete this prior to the event if possible, including clarification of any medical information relevant. This should be repeated for each event programme e.g. half term, Autumn term etc.
- ♦ Ensure that arrangements for how children will be collected/make their way home at the end of activities are clarified.
- ♦ Ensure that emergency contacts are collected with any registration forms completed before the activity starts. NO child should commence an activity without these details and parental permissions.
- ♦ Exercise caution about being alone with a child. In situations where this is unavoidable, ensure another worker or volunteer knows what you are doing and where you are.
- ♦ Ensure that any physical contact is open and initiated by the child's needs, e.g. for a hug when upset or help with toileting.
- ♦ Always prompt children to carry out personal care themselves and if they cannot manage ask if they would like help.
- ♦ Talk explicitly to children about their right to be kept safe from harm.
- ♦ Listen to children and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem.
- ♦ Work as a team with your co-workers/volunteers. Agree with them what behaviour you expect from children and be consistent in enforcing it.
- ♦ Remember if you have to speak to a child about their behaviour you are challenging 'what they did', not 'who they are'.
- ♦ Be clear with anyone disclosing any matter that could concern the safety and wellbeing of a child that you cannot guarantee to keep this information to yourself.
- ♦ Where possible encourage parents to take responsibility for their own children.
- ♦ Make sure you are up to speed with Bedford Creative Arts Information Governance policy for the safe handling of children's data.
- ♦ Contact the parent/carer immediately if a child chooses to leave the activity ahead of schedule. Discourage this as much of possible but permit it if there is no way of persuading them to stay (e.g. DO NOT physically restrain them).

DO NOT:

- ◆ Use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.
- ◆ Smoke or vape in front of any child.
- ◆ Use non-prescribed drugs or be under the influence of alcohol.
- ◆ Behave in a way that frightens or demeans any child.
- ◆ Use any racist, sexist, discriminatory or offensive language.
- ◆ Invite a child to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times.
- ◆ Engage in any sexual activity (this would include using sexualised language) with a child you meet through your duties or start a personal relationship with them, this would be an abuse of trust.
- ◆ Engage in rough or physical games, including horseplay.
- ◆ Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- ◆ Give children presents or personal items.
- ◆ Permit any staff member or artist/practitioner to be left alone with children or to undertake unsupervised 1-2-1 activity unless this has been planned and appropriately risk-assessed.
- ◆ Offer to walk a child home after an activity. Encourage parents/children to make practical arrangements in advance. Only in an emergency may two team members may accompany a child to their home.

Appendix C

Safeguarding Form for Recording Alleged Abuse

Details of the Vulnerable Person (as much as is known: name, address, DoB, contact number – include any relevant details regarding language or special needs)

Time, date and place abuse was reported to you

Details of the alleged abuse (Keep it factual. Use the person's exact words to the extent possible)

Dates of incidents (if applicable)
Location of incidents if known
People involved and relationship to the individual
Any physical injuries observed
Description of action taken (including who referred to, names, times, telephone numbers, etc.)

Signed Date

Role: Organisation:

Appendix D

Reporting Abuse Protocol

- Write down details of alleged abuse and individual's details (use the template in Appendix C to the Safeguarding Policy)
- Check Bedford Creative Arts' records for any known contact details or further information that may be helpful
- If there is an immediate risk of harm, contact the relevant emergency services (Police/Ambulance) on **999**, *otherwise*:
- WITHIN 24 HOURS contact the Designated Person who will contact the Local Safeguarding Lead:
 - ♦ If you are working in a residential /secure setting you should identify the safeguarding lead for that organisation and report to them unless you have concerns that the setting may be implicated in the abuse

Otherwise, to report a concern or to get advice:

Bedford Borough Council:

Child/Young Person Concern:

Report online: <https://ehchildandfamilies.bedford.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/cpconcern#assess>

Tel: **01234 718700 (office hours) or 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)**

Email: LSCB@bedford.gov.uk

Adult Concern:

Tel: **01234 276222 (office hours) or 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)**

Email: adult.protection@bedford.gov.uk

Or download an online form from: <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adult-social-care/report-abuse-safeguarding-vulnerable-adults>

Central Bedfordshire Council:

Child/Young Person Concern:

Tel: **0300 300 8585 (office hours) or 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)**

<https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/xfp/form/519> Adult Concern:

Tel: **0300 300 8122 or 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)**

Email: adult.protection@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Or report online: <https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/xfp/form/544>

Luton Borough Council:

Child/young person:

Tel: **01582 547653 or 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)**

Email: mash@luton.gov.uk

Referrals can also be made online: https://myforms.luton.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-66d4ac73-a2a5-43fd-b29a-3319d8aa1067/AF-Stage9b711450-e0ce-4eff-9e64-21cbe89a93fe/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en&consentMessage=yes

Adult:

Tel: **01582 547730 or 01582 547563 or 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)**

Email: adultsafeguarding@luton.gov.uk

Out of office hours: **0300 300 8123** (for all local authority areas)

Online form:

https://m.luton.gov.uk/Page/Show/Health_and_social_care/safeguarding/safeguarding_adults/Pages/1%20think%20abuse%20is%20taking%20place.aspx

NSPCC 24-hour Child Protection Helpline: **0808 800 5000** or help@NSPCC.org.uk

- Take the name of the person you speak to and record details of the referral to them.
- Follow up by sending written details within 24 hours
- Store the records in a safe secure place.

If a person is dismissed from Bedford Creative Arts (or may have been dismissed had they not left) because they have harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, details of the incident must be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The **DBS** website is <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about> and provides a range of materials to help you to consider or make a referral.

You may also contact the DBS Helpline on **03000 200 190** for information or advice about making a referral.