

# Staffordshire Arts and Museum Service Safeguarding Handbook 2009

## Policy Statement

All adults who come into contact with children and vulnerable adults in their work have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare.

Staffordshire Arts and Museum Service (SAMS) are committed to practice which protects children and vulnerable adults from harm. Staff and volunteers in this organisation recognise and accept our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children and vulnerable adults harm and act appropriately and effectively.

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# 1. What is Safeguarding and why do we need a Safeguarding policy?

## What is 'Safeguarding'?

'Safeguarding' is the process of protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring that they are provided with safe and effective care.

- 'Universal Safeguarding' – Working to keep all children and vulnerable adults safe and create safe environments.
- 'Targeted Safeguarding' – Creating policies and services which target children and vulnerable adults who may be more at risk to keep them safe from harm.
- 'Responsive Safeguarding' – Responding quickly and appropriately when a child or vulnerable adult suffers harm.

SAMS must ensure universal safeguarding, but have policies and procedures in place to act quickly and effectively if a responsive safeguarding action is required.

Responsive safeguarding includes child protection as well as broader issues which can be very damaging to welfare and development (e.g.: bullying and self harm).

## What is Child Protection?

Child Protection is a strand of Safeguarding and literally means protecting children from abuse and neglect through adhering to legislation.

## Why do we have a Safeguarding policy?

Having a Safeguarding Policy in place means that we all understand what we should be doing to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults and the practicalities of doing it.

This policy helps SAMS to:

- Plan and implement projects
- Recruit and train staff
- Respond to allegations of abuse.

SAMS staff have a legal and moral responsibility to ensure safeguarding.

The Safeguarding Policy is a mandatory policy applying to everyone working for Staffordshire Arts and Museum Service, including freelance workers, paid and unpaid staff. It is also operational when SAMS business takes place away from SAMS sites (The Shire Hall Gallery and The County Museum, Shugborough).

The policy relates to all children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This policy also recognises that those from minority ethnic groups and those who are disabled have a variety of different needs. The policy and procedures apply to all children, young people and vulnerable adults regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

All staff should attend a briefing and read and sign this policy as part of their formal induction. You can find a copy on the staff intranet and on the SAMS website: <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/leisure/museumandgalleries/plansandpolicies>



### **What national or international legislation underpins this policy?**

- The Children Act (2004) - The intention of the Act is to ensure that the welfare and developmental needs of children are met, including their need to be protected from harm.  
Museums, libraries and Archives have a statutory responsibility to ensure safeguarding under section 11 of this Act.
- Human Rights Act 1998 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified by UK Government in 1991) - This Act includes the identification of the rights of all children, including their right to be protected from harm.
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000) - This Act relates to the responsibilities of public bodies within child protection and is integral to child protection systems in the UK designed to prevent unsuitable people from working with children.
- The Children's Plan, Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007) - This plan signals the Government's recognition that children cannot enjoy their childhood or achieve their full potential unless they are safe.
- The Staying Safe Action Plan (2008) - This plan makes it clear that safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility. Every organisation and every person within that organisation has a role to play.
- Criminal Records Bureau (2002) - Helps to protect children and vulnerable adults by undertaking standard or enhanced disclosures on people recruited into positions of trust.
- Sexual Offences Act (2003) - An act to prevent sexual offences and protection of children from harm. This act made abuse of trust and 'grooming' criminal offences.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) - An Act to set up the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) to protect children and vulnerable adults
- Police Act (1997) - An Act which made it an offence to an employer not to take sufficient steps to check an employee
- Protection of Children Act (1999) - Required a list to be kept of persons considered unsuitable to work with children.

## **2. Who does this policy apply to?**

### **Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as a person under the age of eighteen for most purposes – or under 16 if the child is employed.

There is no legal definition of a young person. The term acknowledges that individuals aged over 13 years old for example may not think of themselves as 'children' and are often referred to as 'young people'.

In law there is no standard definition of 'vulnerable adult'. Arts Council England uses the following definition: 'Vulnerable adults are people who are or may be in need of community care services because of mental disability or other disability, age or illness, and who are, or who may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation'. Vulnerable adults may be:

- Living in a care home or sheltered housing or detained in a prison, remand centre or young offender's institution
- Receiving welfare service or care in his or her own home, or requiring assistance to carry out his or her own affairs
- Receiving health care
- Participating in an activity specifically targeting people with age related needs, disabilities or physical or mental health conditions
- Receiving payments in lieu of social care services

### **Staff**

Throughout this handbook, the term 'staff' is used to denote all of those who are in the employment of the Arts and Museum Service, including:

- Permanent staff (full and part time)
- Temporary and Casual Staff
- Volunteers
- Contractors or Consultants
- Freelance artists or workshop providers

### **Who in SAMS comes in to contact with children and vulnerable adults?**

All SAMS staff are likely to come in to contact with children or vulnerable adults at some time - whether through contact with the public, work experience or written records. Therefore all staff are to be CRB (and ISA) checked.

All permanent full time and part time members of staff should receive child protection training to Level 1 from the Social Inclusion Team. The training should be renewed every 3 years.

All staff employed by Staffordshire Arts and Museum Service will be expected to read and sign the Safeguarding Policy, either as part of their formal induction process, or when it is renewed. This will be monitored by the Safeguarding Officer. The Safeguarding policy will be introduced to staff during an informal session lead by the Safeguarding Officers.

Where buildings are shared with other services, details of the policy and the procedures will be passed on. This includes Shugborough (Development Services),

Shire Hall Library (Library Services) and the Shire Hall Gallery Coffee Bar Staff (County Catering).

Head of Staffordshire Arts and Museum Service: The Head of Service may come in to contact with the public through attendance at SAMS sites/work experience.

Gallery Front of House and Craft Shop Team: Front of House Staff come in to contact with visitors of all ages in the Gallery. Children may be accompanied by parents or visiting along or with friends. They may also have access to contact details through taking/arranging bookings. The Gallery has a Multi Sensory Room which means that many users have special needs.

Gallery Exhibition Team: Staff may come in to contact with visitors of all ages by their presence on site working in the Gallery. They may also have access to contact details through administrative work.

Administrative Officers: Administrative Staff may come in to contact with visitors of all ages by their presence on site working in the Gallery / Museum. They may also have access to contact details through administrative work.

Arts Development Team: Arts Development Staff may come in to contact with visitors of all ages through working on site at the Gallery, the County Museum or off-site on SAMS-related projects. They may also have access to contact details through managing or co-ordinating projects, some of which involve looked after children, vulnerable adults and other 'at risk' groups.

Museum Team: Museum Officers may have contact with service-users of all ages through project work, supervising work experience students and talks/outreach work.

Past Track Team: Past Track Staff may have contact with service users of all ages through promotional events, information-gathering and supervision of work experience students.

Technical Team: May have contact with service-users of all ages through project work, supervising work experience students and talks/outreach/activities work.

Freelance Co-ordinators/Artists/Contractors: May come in to contact with visitors of all ages through working on site at the Gallery, the County Museum or off-site on SAMS-related projects / meetings / activities. They may also have access to contact details through managing or co-ordinating projects.

The Shire Hall Gallery Coffee Bar Staff: Staff may come in to contact with visitors of all ages by their presence on site in the Gallery. They may also have access to contact details through administrative work.

### **How does SAMS come in to contact with children and vulnerable adults?**

Children and vulnerable adults may use SAMS services in a variety of ways. These may include:

- A visit to The Shire Hall Gallery or The County Museum as part of an organised school/college visit or another organised group

- Visits to The Shire Hall Gallery or The County Museum with family, friends or alone
- Visits to The Shire Hall Gallery or The County Museum to take part in an activity that takes place away from the public areas e.g. at The Shire Hall Gallery in Court Room 2 (These may include art activities, object handling activities, drop-in family activities or bookable children's activities for the over 8s)
- Taking part in an event / project / activity or meeting organised by, or on behalf of, SAMS that takes place away from the SAMS sites of The Shire Hall Gallery or The County Museum
- Work experience placements
- Recruitment

### 3. What is Abuse?

#### Types of Abuse

- Physical abuse – includes hitting, shaking, burning, biting, poisoning, suffocating, drowning or excessive force. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Neglect – a failure to meet basic physical or psychological needs, or if a child is left unsupervised at a young age. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm; failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-takers); or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Emotional abuse – harm through constant lack of love and affection, or persistent threats, verbal attacks or taunting. This may involve bullying; conveying to children, young people or vulnerable adults that they are worthless or unloved or inadequate; placing them in age inappropriate roles (e.g.: primary carer for a younger sibling) or preventing them from participating in exploration, learning and social interaction.
- Sexual abuse – involvement of dependants or developmentally immature children or adolescents in sexual activity that they do not fully comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, or which violate social taboos of family roles. The activities may involve physical acts, exposure to pornography or encouraging inappropriate behaviour.

(More than one category of abuse may be suffered.)

#### Some common signs and symptoms of abuse

This summary gives a brief outline of some of the signs and symptoms which can be causes of concern. They should NOT be regarded as definitive and require professional investigation before attribution as child abuse.

#### Physical signs

Bruises:

- In or around the mouth
- Fingertip bruising on arms, chest or face indicating tight gripping or shaking
- Bruises of different colours indicating injuries of different ages
- Two simultaneous black eyes without bruising to the forehead
- Bruising showing the marks of a belt or implement or a hand print
- Bruising or tears around the earlobes
- Bruising to the head or soft tissue areas of the body

Bites:

- Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped and can leave a clear impression of teeth

Burns and scalds:

- Burns with a clear outline are suspicious
- Circular burns from cigarettes
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electric elements
- Burns of a uniform depth over a large area
- Friction burns from being pulled across a floor
- Scalds producing a water line from immersion or pouring of hot liquid

- Splash marks around the main burn area are caused by liquid being thrown
- Old scars indicating previous burns

Fractures:

- Any fracture in a child under one year is suspicious
- Any skull fracture in the first three years is suspicious

Female circumcision (or female genital mutilation):

- This is illegal except for very rare health reasons

### **Neglect**

Often difficult to identify, neglect leads to the physical and emotional harm of a child.

The signs and symptoms include:

- Failure of a parent to provide adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene, medical care or supervision.
- Failure of a child to grow within the normally expected pattern; they may show pallor, weight loss and signs of poor nutrition.
- Failure of a parent to provide adequate love and affection in a stimulating environment, a child may look listless, apathetic or unresponsive with no apparent medical cause.
- A child may be observed thriving when away from the home environment.

**NB:** Physical activities that have not been risk assessed could technically be counted as neglect!

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse can also be difficult to identify. It is the result of ill treatment in the form of coldness, hostility and rejection; constant denigration or seriously distorted emotional demands; extreme inconsistency of parenting. Some of the signs and symptoms are:

- Low self-esteem
- Apathy
- Being fearful and withdrawn or displaying “frozen watchfulness”
- Unduly aggressive behaviour
- Excessive clinging or attention seeking behaviour
- Constantly seeking to please
- Over-readiness to relate to anyone, even strangers

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse can be suspected based on physical signs, the child’s behaviour or following a direct statement by the child. It is often investigated because of a combination of these signs.

Physical signs:

- Recurrent abdominal pain
- Unexplained pregnancy
- Difficulty walking and sitting
- Faecal soiling or retention
- Recurrent urinary tract infection

Behavioural signs:

- Knowledge unusual for the age of the child

- Sexually provocative relationships with adults
- Sexualised play with other children
- Hints of sexual activity through play, drawing or conversation
- Requests for contraceptive advice
- Lack of trust or marked fear of familiar adults
- Sudden onset of soiling or wetting
- Severe sleep disturbance
- Change of eating habits
- Social isolation and withdrawal
- Role reversal in the home e.g. a daughter taking over the mothering role
- Inappropriate displays of physical contact between adult and child
- Learning difficulties, poor concentration
- Inability to make friends
- Using school or church as a haven, arriving early and reluctant to leave
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity
- Truancy, running away from home
- Self harm, mutilation or suicide attempts
- Dependence on drugs or alcohol
- Anti-social behaviour including promiscuity and prostitution

**What does it mean when abuse is ‘disclosed’ to you?**

This is the situation when a child tells you directly that they have been or are being abused. This is known as disclosure.

## 4. Who abuses?

Abuse can be perpetrated by anyone - relatives, partners, friends, neighbours, volunteers, paid care workers, or strangers - and can happen anywhere. Most child abuse is committed by those closest to the child: parents, brothers or sisters, step parent, carer, babysitter, family friend or other trusted adult. It is known to be perpetrated by children against other children: child perpetrators will have greater power than their victims, perhaps due to age, gender, physique or ability. Abusers come from a wide range of social and intellectual backgrounds.

### **Why don't children and vulnerable adults report abuse?**

Children don't tell about abuse because they are:

- Scared because they have been threatened
- Believe they will be taken away from home (individuals are only placed into care as a last resort)
- Believe they are to blame
- Think it is what happens to all children
- Feel embarrassed or guilty
- Don't want the abuser to get into trouble
- Have communication or learning difficulties
- May not have the vocabulary for what happened
- Are afraid they won't be believed

### **Why don't adults report their suspicions?**

Adults don't report their suspicions because:

- They find it hard to believe what we are hearing
- Cannot believe the suspicion that may be about someone they know
- Fear they might get it wrong or make it worse
- Fear the consequences of getting it wrong – for the child, family and themselves
- Simply don't want to be involved
- Do not have the information on what to do and who to contact

These are normal reactions. However, it is more serious if they prevent us listening to a child and responding appropriately.

## 5. What should I do if I have suspicions about abuse, or if a child or vulnerable adult discloses to me?

### How might you become aware that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused?

- Someone might report to you that a child has told them something or that they strongly believe that a child has been or is being abused.
- There may be physical signs of a non-accidental injury
- An individual's behaviour may indicate that he or she is being abused.
- Observing one child abusing another

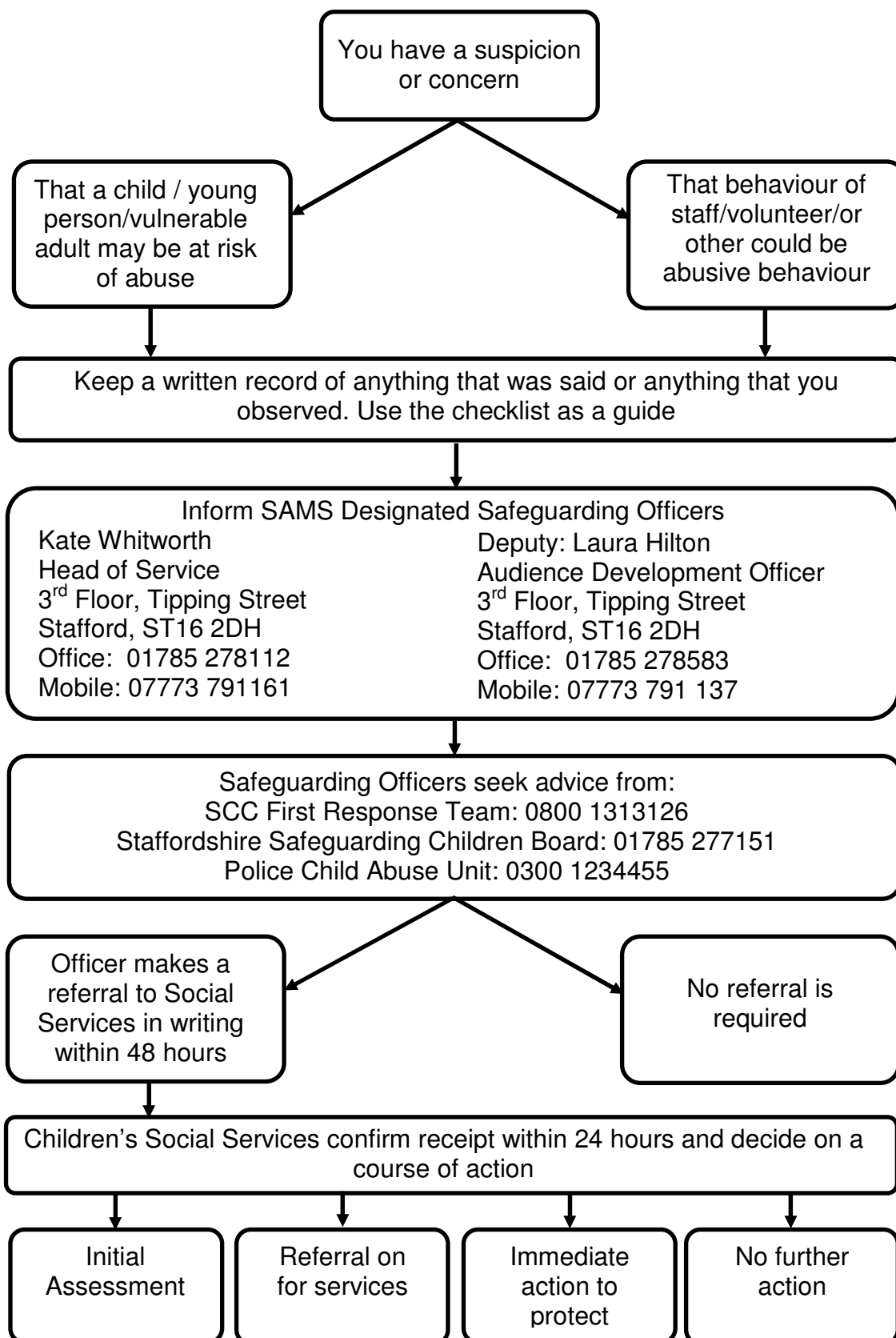
### What should you do if a child or vulnerable adult discloses to you that they have been or are being abused?

- Stay calm and in control and avoid interpreting information
- When possible, remain silent and listen carefully to what is being said
- Ask questions for clarification only
- At all times avoid asking questions that 'lead', or suggest a particular answer
- Do not promise to keep secrets and find an early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others. Make it clear that you will only tell people who need to know and who can help.
- Allow the individual to continue at his/her own pace
- Reassure the individual that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Make sure they know what you will do next and who the information will be shared with
- Do not initiate contact and hug the individual to comfort them as this sort of conduct could be inappropriate. Instead, hand them a tissue.
- Record in writing what was said using the child or vulnerable adult's own words as soon as possible: note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that you sign and date the record. (However, never ask the individual to sign the record as this can be construed as a 'statement', and any criminal investigation could be impaired.)
- Speak immediately to the designated person for Safeguarding. Remember, if the child or vulnerable adult is part of an organised group, report your concerns to the organisation's officer (over the telephone if they are not present at the time).
- Do not conduct an enquiry into what has happened.

### Remember:

It is important that everyone in the organisation is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is **not** responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. **We do not investigate.** That is a task for the professional protection agencies following a referral to them of concern.

## 6. How to report your suspicions that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused, or if abuse is disclosed to you



**Remember:**

- Remain calm and in control
- Listen carefully to what has been said and record it carefully
- Ask questions only for clarification
- Don't give your own view or opinions
- Try not to appear shocked, even if you are
- Don't promise to keep it a secret - say you will need to share with others
- Do not delay: report your concerns to the Safeguarding Officer at the earliest opportunity; certainly within the same working day
- Remember only to share the information on a need-to-know basis
- Reassure the person that they did the right thing
- Make sure that they know what will happen now
- Do not investigate.
- In an emergency, call 999

**The designated person for Safeguarding is responsible for:**

- Monitoring and recording concerns
- Discussing concerns with whoever has raised them
- Taking advice on how to proceed and whether parents/carers should be notified
- Ensuring procedures are followed on such matters as making a referral, confidentiality and recording
- Making referrals to social care services or the police by telephone without delay - and confirming referrals in writing within 48 hours of notification
- Liaison with other agencies and external organisations
- Keeping up-to-date on 'best practice' and arranging training for all staff
- Reviewing Safeguarding policies and procedures
- Retaining any records in a central, lockable, non-portable cabinet for 6 years following the last contact with the child or vulnerable adult
- Ensuring the names of any children, vulnerable adults or staff members about whom there are concerns are not shared around the organisation

**The designated person for Safeguarding is:**

Kate Whitworth, Head of the Arts and Museum Service

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Tipping Street, Stafford, ST16 2DH

Office: 01785 278112

Mobile: 07773 791161

Email: kate.whitworth@staffordshire.gov.uk

**The deputy person for Safeguarding is:**

Laura Hilton, Audience Development Officer

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Tipping Street, Stafford, ST16 2DH

Office: 01782 278583

Mobile: 07773791137

Email: laura.hilton@staffordshire.gov.uk

## 7. Checklist for reporting suspected abuse

**Staff name:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Location:**

**Person you are concerned about:**

Please give as much detail as possible, including name, age, ethnicity and address if you know it.

**Description:**

Brief description of what has prompted your concerns: include dates, times etc of any specific incidents.

**Action:**

Please note anything that the person has said, anything you have said, what you saw and what action you have taken. Use the person's own words where possible. Do not ask any questions, unless you need to clarify.

Staff signature: ..... (No-one else should sign this form.)

**Please pass this immediately to Kate Whitworth, Designated Person in SAMS for Safeguarding. Do not share this information with anyone else.**

## **8. What is our confidentiality policy?**

The legal principle that 'the welfare of the child is paramount' means that the right to confidentiality or privacy which might apply to other situations should not be allowed to over-ride the right of children and vulnerable adults to be protected from harm. However, every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when an allegation has been made and is being investigated. The Government recommend that records should be kept in a central, lockable, non-portable cabinet for 6 years after the last contact with the child, young person or vulnerable adult.

## **9. Code of conduct and good practice for Staff, Volunteers and Freelancers when working with children and vulnerable adults**

Children should be given every opportunity to learn that no-one has the right to do anything to them that makes them feel uncomfortable. They should be taught and encouraged not to put up with any behaviour from adults or children within the organisation which makes them feel threatened.

- Treat all children and vulnerable adults with respect and dignity
- Ensure that their welfare and safety is paramount at all times
- Always act in a professional way and not accept bullying, swearing or other disruptive behaviour
- Liaise openly with parents & carers
- Only use physical contact if absolutely necessary
- Avoid being alone with children/vulnerable adults at all times
- Take simple precautions (e.g.: keep a door open if alone with a child)
- Avoid taking children to the toilet, and do not go in the cubicle with them
- Avoid making suggestive comments, even in jest
- Do not promise to keep secrets, or use the word 'secret'
- Do not socialise with the children you have been working with (e.g.: through text messaging or social networking sites)
- Do not give out personal telephone numbers to children, young people or vulnerable adults or use them as a method of contact.
- Listen to, and act upon, any disclosures/allegations/concerns of child abuse
- Avoid meeting children or vulnerable adults outside of a work context
- Undertake approved child protection training every 3 years
- Make activities FUN and enjoyable

Breaching this code of conduct could result in disciplinary action or referral to the authorities.

### **Dealing with children:**

- Best practice is to have groups working in one large room, or individuals working in a public space. If for some reason you are on your own ensure that other members of staff know the situation and try to keep a door to public areas propped open
- If you have not had a CRB check you should always be accompanied by a member of staff who has had a CRB check.
- Never take a child or vulnerable adult home. A taxi should be called on their behalf. If this is not possible and a member of staff has to take a child or vulnerable adult home in their car, they should only do so with the express consent of the parent/guardian/carer and should ensure that their line manager is aware of the situation
- You may direct a child or vulnerable adult to the toilet, but do not enter the cubicle with them.
- Use common sense in physical contact. Avoid contact, but not if this places the child or vulnerable adult at risk.
- Do not show favouritism.

### **During an activity:**

- If running a session for an organised group whether on or off site, ensure that the group leader is present at all times and that you are not left unsupervised with the group at any time (this includes work with schools). If it is unavoidable, ensure that other members of staff are aware of the situation
- All staff should be identifiable (ie wear your badge)
- If children or vulnerable adults have been left in the care of the Museum/Gallery for an activity a booking form must be filled in prior to the activity with contact details and relevant medical information
- A risk assessment must be filled in to consider the hazards presented by the activity

### **Health & Safety Policy**

SAMS abides by the Staffordshire County Council Health & Safety policy.

The following activities are risk assessed for use by the general public:

- Exhibitions
- Activities and events
- The fabric of the building
- Day to day functions and activities in the building

This creates a safe environment through careful planning and supervision, adequate insurance and clear health & safety guidelines.

### **Outreach Activities**

If you are running an outreach activity away from SAMS properties (e.g.: at a school or youth centre), you should follow the Child Protection Policy of that organisation and make your report to their Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Remember:

- Supervision of the children or vulnerable adults remains the responsibility of the organisation you are visiting.
- At least one member of staff from that organisation should be present at all times
- Bring identification with you and be prepared to comply with any security procedures the organisation has in place
- Report any concerns to the designated Safeguarding Officer at that organisation, either during or after your visit.

### **Organised Groups**

It is the responsibility of organised groups to ensure an appropriate ratio of adults to children/vulnerable adults (not including SAMS staff). SAMS recommends a ratio of 1:10 for indoor activities and 1:5 for outdoor activities.

Group leaders take overall responsibility for discipline during their visit. It is not the duty of SAMS staff to maintain good order during the delivery of educational activities/visits.

## 10. Parental Consent

Parental consent should be obtained for:

- Young People under 18 participating in any booked activity, workshop or project.
- Young people under the age of 16 using ICT equipment and the internet.
- Use of photography or film with children and young people under the age of 14. (Young people aged between 14 and 16 may sign their own consent forms, but it is recommended that parental consent is obtained.)

Surveys or consultations involving children under 14 where the children may be identified by their responses. (Collection of statistical data does not require parental consent.)

### Photography or Videoing

SAMS photography policy states that no images of vulnerable adults or children can be taken during SAMS-run activities or on SAMS-run sites without the consent of a parent, carer or guardian.

Do not take or allow photographs to be taken of children or vulnerable adults in the course of SAMS-run activities or on SAMS-run sites without having a photography permission form filled in by the parent/carers for each person. Class teachers may sign permission slips to acknowledge that their school has obtained consent for each child who will appear in the photographs/video that you take.

Permission forms are available from **Steph Newport or Sam Carpenter, Communications Team.**

If a newspaper photographer wants to take a picture of a child or vulnerable adult on site, they must get the permission from the parents or carer. They must not be allowed to take photographs of unaccompanied children or vulnerable adults.

If a newspaper photographer attends a SAMS activity or workshop where children or vulnerable adults have been left in the care of SAMS staff, a permission form must have been filled in and the photographer must not take full names to print in a caption. If parents or carers have not given permission for photographs to be taken this should be indicated on name badges with a red dot in the corner to show who can be photographed and who cannot.

The display of any images taken with permission should be sensitive and appropriate.

Images should be stored with the reference number from the photo consent form as the title of the containing folder or image and may be kept for up to four years, after which it should be deleted or permission for use reobtained.

### Interviews and Surveys

If you are interviewing or surveying children under 14 either in focus groups or through 1-1 sessions, you should have obtained permission from their parents to do so.

If you are approaching children within a public space, you should ensure that notices explaining the project should be prominently displayed. Make sure that you have a name badge or other form of identification with you.

If you are collecting information which could identify individuals, you will need to obtain permission from their parents or carers. There are no data protection concerns if you are collecting statistical data.

Ensure that all one to one interviews with children or vulnerable adults take place in public places, not in separate rooms.

All data that is collected from children or vulnerable adults during surveys, project work or consultation must comply with the Data Protection Act, 1998.

## 11. Lost/Unsupervised Children and Vulnerable Adults

### Dealing with lost/unsupervised children or vulnerable adults in the Museum or Gallery

Children are the legal responsibility of their parents or carers. Children under the age of 8 should always be accompanied during visits to museums or Galleries. A notice stating this should be displayed prominently to remind parents of their responsibility.

### Unaccompanied Children/Vulnerable Adults

- Approach with a colleague
- Try to find out whether anyone knows that they are at your venue unaccompanied and if they know how to get home.
- Use your best judgement about their age, ability and understanding to decide if they are safe and able to make their own way home or if they are expecting to be collected. Ask yourself:
  - What is the person's age and understanding?
  - Does the person seem capable of finding their home?
  - Does the person appear to know clearly where he/she lives?
  - Are there any busy roads/hazards on the route?
- If you are not sure, encourage the person to remain in the library or museum until the parent or carer can be contacted
- If attempts to contact a parent or carer fail, you should contact the First Response Team on 0800 1313126 or call your local Police Station.
- **Children leaving booked workshops or activities should be collected by their parents or carers, unless by prior arrangement.**

### Closing Time

If a child is in your venue unaccompanied at closing time then:

- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Two members of staff should approach the person to find out if they are waiting for a parent or carer to collect them
- If possible, ring the person's home to clarify the situation
- Two members of staff should wait for the parent/carer to arrive
- If you cannot contact the parent/carer, ring the First Response Team on 0800 1313126 or the local police. Both members of staff should wait with the person until they arrive

### Lost Child

If a child is reported lost or missing, inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately with the following information, giving as full details as possible:

- Name of person
- Age of person
- Address/name of school/day centre
- Physical description (height, colour of hair, clothing)
- Where the person was last seen
- The time the person was last seen

Once a sufficient check is made, if the person is not found, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will inform the police. The member of staff who took the initial report should reassure parents/carers that action is being taken and explain that contact will be maintained with them until the child is found.

If a member of staff is approached by someone who is lost they should:

- Reassure them
- Seek to establish identifying details – name, age, school
- Contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer with identifying details and other information that might help reunite the person with their parent/carer
- In the unlikely event that the person is not claimed the Designated Safeguarding Officer should contact the police.
- Check the identity of the person to whom the person is handed over to. These details should be kept on file in a lost person record
- **Do not give out any personal details about the child publicly. If radio systems are used ensure that lines are blocked and secure**

### **Emergency evacuation**

During an emergency evacuation, if there are any unaccompanied children or vulnerable adults in the Museum / Gallery, ensure that they are escorted out by a member of staff. If there is a Museum / Gallery organised event take the register out with you to do a roll call to ensure everyone is present

## 12. E-Safety

We promote the highest standard of safeguarding practice in all our activities with children, vulnerable adults, their families and/or carers. We will adhere rigorously to this policy in all aspects of our work when anyone in our organisation is accessing any form of digital or electronic communication, including the internet, mobile phones, games, photography or videos.

### **E-Safety Code of Conduct**

We expect everyone in our organisation to agree and sign up to our code of conduct:

- Children under the age of 16 must have written permission to use IT equipment from a parent or carer
- Use the internet and other forms of communication in a sensible and polite way
- Only access websites, send messages or access and use other resources that will not hurt or upset anybody
- Seek permission if I want to use personal information or take photographs of other people
- Report any concerns to the lead or deputy Safeguarding Officer immediately
- Be clear that you cannot maintain confidentiality if there is a concern about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult.

### **What are the risks?**

There are many potential risks for children and vulnerable adults including:

- Accessing age inappropriate or illegal websites.
- Receiving unwanted or upsetting text or e-mail messages or images.
- Viewing or receiving inappropriate or socially unacceptable material
- Ignoring copyright law by downloading music, video or even homework cheat material
- Bullying by peers and people they consider 'friends'
- Posting personal information that can identify and locate them offline
- Meeting people assuming a false identity
- Sexual grooming, luring, exploitation and abusive contact with strangers
- Involvement in making or distributing illegal or inappropriate content
- Exposure to information and interaction with others who encourage self harm
- Exposure to racist or hate material
- Encouragement of violent behaviour, such as 'happy slapping'
- Glorifying activities such as drug taking or excessive drinking
- Physical harm to young people in making video content, such as enacting and imitating stunts and risk taking activities
- Leaving and running away from home as a result of contacts made online

### **What else might be of concern?**

A child or vulnerable adult who:

- is becoming secretive about where they are going to or who they are meeting.
- will not let you see what they are accessing on-line.
- is using a webcam in a closed area, away from other people.
- Is accessing the web or using a mobile or Personal Data Assistant (PDA) for long periods and at all hours.
- clears the computer history every time they use it.

- receives unexpected money or gifts from people you don't know.

An adult who:

- befriends a child/children on the internet or by text messaging.
- has links to children on their Facebook or other social network site; especially if they work in a position of care such as a sports coach or youth worker.
- is secretive about what they are doing and who they are meeting.

**Before introducing online equipment to public spaces, working on computers with children or vulnerable adults or setting up, joining or using a social networking site, speak to SCC's Web Development Team for up-to-date information on policy and procedure.**

### **Minimising the Risks**

We will:

- Filter online access through SCC's 'Websense' system to prevent children and young people accessing inappropriate content.
- Talk to children and vulnerable adults about what they are accessing online.
- Keep computer(s) in a general space where we can monitor what is going on.
- Explain the risks of giving out personal details online.
- Talk about how people can be anyone they want to be online, e.g. by using misleading e-mails, photographs of other people, telling lies about their age, school, hobbies.
- Encourage children and vulnerable adults to think carefully about what photographs or videos they use online. They can be used and tampered with by other people, or they may not be appropriate.
- Advise children and vulnerable adults to only text, chat or webcam to people they know for real.
- Talk about how to identify SPAM messages or junk mail and how to delete them. This also applies to messages from people they do not know, or opening attachments.
- Discuss how people hide their identities online and the importance of never meeting new online "friends" for real.
- Make sure children and vulnerable adults understand they can always talk to us or their parents and/or carers about anything that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Look on the internet together for information about how to deal with or report problems.
- Talk about how/when information or images get on to the internet, they can never be erased.

### **Social Networking**

Social media provides unique opportunities for organisations to engage, connect and develop unique relationships with people in a creative and dynamic medium where users are active participants. Social networking services allow users to create their own content and share it with a vast network of individuals sometimes referred to as online communities.

Any form of social networking must be carefully monitored.

Photography/video must adhere to the consent guidelines used across the service.

**What to do if you suspect online abuse**

Report your suspicions to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

In the UK, illegal sexual child abuse images should be reported to the Internet Watch Foundation at **[www.iwf.org](http://www.iwf.org)**. Reports about suspicious behaviour towards children and young people in an online environment should be made to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre at **[www.ceop.uk](http://www.ceop.uk)**. Law enforcement agencies and the service provider may need to take urgent steps to locate the child and/or remove the content from the internet.

**Where a child or young person may be in immediate danger, always dial 999 for police assistance.**

## **13. Safe Recruitment**

### **New employees**

SAMS follows the County Council procedures for recruitment and selection of new staff. CRB clearance and references are taken up during the recruitment of new staff. The Human Resources Department will provide advice and guidance on recruitment, selection and CRB processes.

### **Freelancer/Volunteer Policy**

CRB clearance and a reference are taken up for the recruitment of new Volunteers or Freelance workers who have contact with children. Existing Volunteers are being processed through the same checks.

When recruiting a new member of staff, it is important to consider:

- Likely degree of contact with children and vulnerable adults
- Aptitude or experience of working with children or vulnerable adults
- Attitude toward working with children or vulnerable adults

From July 2010, job specifications must state whether applicants must be ISA registered if this is a consideration of the role.

### **What are the CRB, VBS and ISA?**

CRB stands for Criminal Records Bureau which is the police system set up to check people working with children or vulnerable adults. The system identifies those people who already have a conviction and flags them up as unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

There are two levels of CRB check:

Standard – For posts that involve working with children, young people or vulnerable adults

Enhanced – For posts that involve a great deal of contact (e.g.: regularly training, caring for or taking sole responsibility for children or vulnerable adults).

Staffordshire County Council's policy on CRB checks says that they should be renewed every year for permanent staff.

VBS stands for Vetting and Barring Scheme. The VBS launched on 12 October 2009, and is run by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). The ISA exists to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults by assessing the suitability of potential employees. It costs £64 for employees to register with the ISA, but the service is free for volunteers. Individuals will only have to register once and employers will be able to check their status online.

There are two types of activities:

Regulated: Any activity that involves frequent (once a month or more) or intensive (30+ day periods) contact with children or vulnerable adults or any activity which places someone in a position of responsibility (e.g.: learning activities)

Controlled: For support workers (e.g.: cleaners, shop staff, caterers) and those with access to sensitive records.

The VBS informs employers whether there is any reason why a potential employee should not work with children by cross referencing their details with the barred lists,

whereas the CRB check uses the police database to flag up criminal convictions of any nature. Therefore, if a role includes financial responsibility, driving groups of children, etc, a CRB check will still be required.

It is now a criminal offence for individuals barred by the ISA to work or apply to work with children or vulnerable adults in childcare. Employers also face criminal sanctions for knowingly employing a barred individual across a wider range of work.

For more information on the scheme, visit [www.isa-gov.org.uk](http://www.isa-gov.org.uk)

July 2010: All new employees or staff moving jobs will have to be CRB and ISA registered.

2011 - 2012: Staff without CRB checks should register with the CRB and ISA.

2012 - 2013: All staff with CRB checks over 3 years old must register with the ISA.

2013 - 2014: Staff with CRB checks less than 3 years old must register with the ISA.

### **Rehabilitation of Offenders**

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) was brought in to ensure that ex-offenders who have not offended in a period of time since their conviction are not discriminated against when applying for jobs. Offenders do not have to disclose convictions that are 'spent', unless the job is exempted from the list. Exempted jobs include working with children and vulnerable adults, alcohol or drug abusers or the chronically sick. In such cases, organisations are legally entitled to ask applicants for details of any convictions, irrespective of whether they are 'spent' or 'unspent' under the Act.

Unless declined by the ISA, people with previous convictions on their CRB may be considered for job roles once the safety and security of other employees, customers, clients and property have been considered.

## 14. What happens if an allegation of abuse is made against me?

### How might concerns arise?

Concerns or allegations about your behaviour may arise in a number of different ways:

- An allegation made directly by a child or parent/carer.
- An allegation made by a colleague or member of staff.
- Information from the Police or Children's Social Care. (E.g.: information arising from child protection enquiries about a worker's own children)
- Information from a third party or member of the public.
- Information disclosed anonymously or online.
- Concerns generated through an employment relationship.

### What happens when an allegation is made?

Whether or not there is any evidence, concerns about the behaviour of adult/s in the organisation will be referred without delay to the Lead Safeguarding Officer who will contact SCC's nominated Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and, in an emergency, the police.

In the rare situation that the concerns are about the Lead Safeguarding Officer, it is important to refer to the deputy person. This may not be appropriate, in which case any member may personally refer direct to the LADO.

The LADOs are located within the First Response Team: **01785 277311 (Direct line)** or outside office hours at the Emergency Duty Service: **01785 354030**

The LADO will assess the allegations, and will open a case if it appears that you have:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child or vulnerable adult
- Committed a criminal offence against, or related to a child or vulnerable adult
- Behaved in a way towards a child which indicates an unsuitability to work with children or vulnerable adults. (This may relate to a specific act, an accumulation of concerns, or behaviours occurring outside of the workplace which do not fit with the responsibility of your work role such as acting in an irresponsible manner, abusing a position of power, failing to recognise clear professional boundaries, being the subject of other criminal proceedings.)

### Will I be suspended?

Suspension will not be seen as an automatic response to an allegation and in all cases should be individually considered. It is likely in any case where:

- there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm,
- the allegation warrants investigation by the police,
- is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.

You may also be suspended as a 'neutral act' designed to protect all parties or moved to work activities of a non-contact nature while investigations take place.

If you are suspended for any reason, you will be advised to contact your Union representative and should have regular updates from the Safeguarding Officer about progress and likely timescales for investigation.

### **What happens next?**

- The LADO and Safeguarding Officer meet to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation, and to agree an appropriate course of action within 24 hours.
- There are five possible outcomes:
  - Allegation is demonstrably false: no further action needed
  - Internal resolution without need for further support from LADO
  - Consideration of disciplinary action by SCC
  - Enquiries and assessment into 'at risk' individual by Social Care
  - Police investigation of a possible criminal offence.
- If no formal disciplinary action is required, all appropriate action will be undertaken within 3 working days.
- If action is required, the LADO will schedule a strategy meeting within 3 working days and develop a timescale for further action. Any further investigation will be completed within 10 working days and, following this, a disciplinary hearing will take place within 15 working days.
- If the case is referred to the police, the LADO will record their decision and then discuss whether any further action is required with the Safeguarding Officer.
- If it is decided that you can return to normal duties following the investigation, you will be fully supported.

### **Will this stay on my record?**

Yes. Records of allegations must be retained until the subject of the allegation reaches normal retirement age, or 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer. Records relating to allegations which have been found to be without substance must also be retained in the same manner. Throughout the procedure, the LADO will have been keeping records on when, how and why decisions were reached. The LADO will manage your case on a 'need to know' basis.

### **What happens if I am dismissed or decide to resign?**

It is important that every effort is made to follow cases through to a conclusion in all circumstances irrespective of whether you submit your resignation or decline to co-operate with the necessary investigation or activities.

If you are dismissed for reasons of misconduct or resign in response to these conclusions, SCC has a statutory duty to inform the ISA, regardless of whether the Safeguarding Officer and LADO feel you should be barred from working with children.

A "compromise agreement", by which a person agrees to resign on the basis of the employer not pursuing disciplinary action, and by both parties agreeing a form of words to be used in any future reference, will not be considered appropriate in any circumstances. The disciplinary process will, as far as practicable, be undertaken and concluded even in the absence of the worker.

**You can find a full length version of this policy on the Intranet titled: 'Allegations of abuse made against a person who works with children'**

## 15. Whistleblowing

The Council expects employees and others that it deals with to come forward and voice any serious concerns about the council's work. The Council will treat every disclosure in confidence, and only reveal the identity of the person making it if absolutely necessary (e.g. if required in connection with legal action).

The Council will keep people who make disclosures informed about the progress and (subject to legal constraints) outcome of any investigation carried out.

The Whistleblowing policy applies to concerns of an "exceptionally serious" nature - which include the alleged abuse of children or vulnerable adults in an authority's care. Employees with any concerns of this nature should contact the SAMS Safeguarding Officer or a Whistleblowing Contact Officer, either by telephone or in writing.

On receipt of a disclosure from a Contact Officer a Monitoring Officer will determine what further action, if any, is needed, which may comprise:

- internal investigation
- report to the Police
- report to external audit
- independent enquiry
- any combination of the above

A full version of the Whistleblowing policy and a list of Contact Officers may be found online at:

[www.intra.staffordshire.gov.uk/ppp/policies/standards/policy/whistleblowing/whistle.htm](http://www.intra.staffordshire.gov.uk/ppp/policies/standards/policy/whistleblowing/whistle.htm)