

Green Shoes Arts

Green Shoes Arts Children & Young People Safeguarding Policy & Procedures 2021/22

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1. Policy Statement

Green Shoes Arts is an organisation that is committed to practice which safeguards all children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs. Green Shoes Arts facilitators understand that the welfare of a child or young person is always paramount and their rights, wishes and feelings will be respected and listened to.

2. Introduction

This Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy & Procedures document is founded on a considerable body of legislation, government guidance and standards, designed to ensure that children are protected from harm including: The Children Act 1989 and 2004, Human Rights Act 1998 and The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified by the UK Government in 1991). It has been prepared drawing from the Department of Health publication "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018" (DoH WTSC 2018), the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Protection of Children Act 1999 (POCA 99), the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children's Research and Learning resources including Safeguarding and the Performing Arts 2019, the London Safeguarding Children Board's publication London Child Protection Procedures updated March 2020, the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 legislation, the Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014 and the Department of Health and Department of Education's "Special educational needs and disabilities code of practice 0-25" statutory guidance 2015.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this document 'children / child' means 'children, young people and vulnerable young persons' throughout.

A "child" is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday (DoH WTSC 2014). A "young person" is defined in the Children and Families Act 2014, as a person over compulsory school age but under 25 who has special educational needs and disabilities.

A Vulnerable Young Person means: anyone under the age of 18; and/or anyone who needs (or may need) community care services because of mental disability, other disability, age or illness, and who is (or may be) unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. (Arts Council England 2019 definition)

For the purpose of this policy document, "Staff" refers to any :

1. Permanent employee,
2. Freelancer on a self-employed freelance basis or
3. Volunteer who is unpaid staff

Who are working under the contract of GSA or on GSA projects.

4. Child Safeguarding Policy

The protection of children requires a close working relationship between parent/carers, social services departments, the police service, medical practitioners, community, health workers, schools, other voluntary agencies and Green Shoes Arts to:

- protect children first and foremost;
- work to the highest standards of current good practice in the field;
- recognise the rights of staff and their need for support;
- investigate and implement effective intervention when necessary;
- identify early indicators and establish either single or multi agency intervention and support.

The abuse of children may take place in any environment. Any child may be abused, and the perpetrator may be known or unknown to them. Therefore,

- all Green Shoes Arts staff, freelancers and volunteers must accept their responsibility to prevent this, be ready to work with each other, and be cooperative with other professionals, with children and their families and have a responsibility to report concerns and disclosures;
- children and parents are informed of the policy and procedures as is appropriate;
- all concerns, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by all staff and responded to appropriately - this may require an assessment for early intervention (CAF), a referral to children's services (MARF), and in emergencies, the Police. The appropriate actions to protect the child can then be planned and actioned, where necessary.

In order to ensure such guidelines, Green Shoes Arts will always:

- Carry out correct recruitment and employment checks when employing staff, freelancers and volunteers including that all are checked against the Protection of Children Act. This now forms part of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- Arrange appropriate supervision and training for all staff, working with children, young people, vulnerable persons and their families;
- Ensure that comprehensive risk assessments are carried out for all activities;
- Ensure all staff, are fully aware of the procedure to follow should a concern or disclosure arise;
- Share information about concerns, disclosures and interventions with relevant professional agencies in line with Government Guidelines for Information Sharing;
- Review its policies and practice annually,
- Treat any situation where a complaint made against, or criminal proceedings commenced in respect of any person representing Green Shoes Arts, with gravity and the utmost urgency.

5. Child Protection Procedures

The purpose of these procedures is to guide staff in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults from harm when participating in Green Shoes Arts projects and to make clear to staff their responsibilities, the actions they should take and the lines of responsibility if any concerns about the child or young person's safety should arise. Please refer to Vulnerable Adults Policy for specific procedures in working with Vulnerable Adults.

5.1. Recruitment

In order to ensure the suitability of all artists and other staff working on projects involving direct contact with children, and that they work in a way as to protect children from harm, Green Shoes Arts asks them to:

- Supply references from at least two people, who are not family members, who have first-hand and recent knowledge of their experience of work or contact with children. Referees are asked specifically to comment on the staff's suitability to work with children;
- Apply for an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service or if registered provide their DBS certification details in order to review a person's status in the .gov online DBS portal.
- Repeat DBS checks bi-annually for regular staff with continued service with the organisation or on re-recruitment if a period of 3 months or more has lapsed between work.

GSA is signed up to the Government Update service and is able to make immediate checks on members of staff if there is a legal or regulatory reason to do so, or if a concern is raised.

Additionally, Green Shoes Arts:

- Always employs staff who have appropriate experience, skills and qualifications to lead arts activities with children;
- Gives all staff a copy of Green Shoes Arts' policies on Child Protection & Equal Opportunities;
- Provides all staff with safeguarding training upon commencement of post, annual in-house refresher training and bi-annual external training (where appropriate for core staff);
- Ensures that a teacher, youth worker, care worker or other group leader is present during workshops when possible;
- Ensures that staff do not work alone with children.

In case of Green Shoes Arts hosting placements for student volunteers, Green Shoes Arts will ensure that students do not have unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults and references are sought from course tutor and at least one other referee who can vouch for their suitability to work with children if they are to work directly with children or young people.

Candidates applying for posts involving contact with children must be made aware that a DBS check will be carried out, and that any offer of employment is conditional upon them having no conviction relevant to working with children. Disclosure checks should not be carried out in advance of an offer of

employment, but recruitment must be planned so as to allow time for the check to be completed before the candidate takes up the post.

5.2. Recognition and Reporting

Recognition of physical abuse may take the form of marks, bruises or injuries. Behavioural problems may be a sign of emotional abuse. Neglect is unlikely to be recognised by any single act or omission / commission. It is recognised that repeated acts of neglectful behaviour or lack of care and by the impact of that on the child's welfare, is deemed as a form of abuse.

Types of abuse;

- Physical abuse - this may include hitting, shaking, poisoning, burning, scalding or anything that causes physical harm to a child
- Sexual abuse and exploitation - this may include forcing, enticing or grooming a child to take part in sexual activities either physically or online
- Emotional abuse - this may include verbal abuse, bullying or making a child feel ashamed, humiliated or unwanted
- Neglect - this may include children being left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care
- Gangs, county lines and criminal activity - this includes being involved with or on the edges of gangs, victims of violence, or those experiencing pressure to steal, carry weapons or drugs and other criminal activity.

Green Shoes Arts staff do not act as health professionals and so are not in a position to offer confidential support to any participant.

If a member of staff is approached by a participant attempting to share personal information relating to abuse or neglect, the Green Shoes Arts staff member will tell the participant that they cannot hold onto confidential information and that they will pass on the information to the dedicated Green Shoes Arts Lead Safeguarding Officer, or equivalent senior member of staff within the host organisation.

While it is not the responsibility of Green Shoes Arts Staff to initiate any sort of referral process on behalf of a child, all staff have a responsibility to pass on all concerns to the Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO) in the first instance and as soon as possible.

Where there are any grounds for concern the LSO should follow the London Child Protection Procedures to escalate the concern and contact the local Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and where advised by MASH and where appropriate submit an online referral form (MARF).

LBBB MASH Team Contact Details:

Monday to Friday 9am to 4:45pm on 020 8227 3811

Out of hours duty team from 4:45pm to 9am, Monday to Friday, weekends and bank holidays on 020 8594 8356 LBBB MARF Online Referral Form: Report a serious concern about a child (MARF) for professionals

Green Shoes Arts Staff are able to encourage children to talk to their parents or carers and make sure that they are aware of the appropriate sources of help, for example the school nurse, counsellor, GP or local young person's advice service.

5.2.1. Guidance on - Dealing with Concerns Regarding Colleagues

All staff have a professional obligation to raise professional concerns about the conduct of colleagues. Where a member of staff is concerned that a child is at risk of physical or psychological injury due to the conscious or unconscious behaviour of another member of staff, their concerns must be passed on.

The initial point of contact should be the Lead Safeguarding Officer;

- If appropriate, and following discussion and investigation, suspension and / or disciplinary action must be instigated in addition to making a referral to Social Services. The police may also be involved, depending on the nature of the alleged abuse;
- It is important that staff are supported throughout this process. Another member of staff from the organisation should be allocated to the staff member, to liaise, support and maintain neutrality;
- Individuals may choose to seek alternative support, though Green Shoes Arts will ensure that a point of contact is initiated, should it be required.
- Please refer to the Disciplinary Policy for further information.

5.2.2. Guidance on - Responding to signs, suspicions or allegations of abuse

Any member of Green Shoes Arts' staff who is made aware of actual or possible child abuse should report and discuss their concerns as soon as possible to the Green Shoes Arts' LSO. Any disclosures or observations should be recorded by filling in the disclosure form. In the unlikely event of members of staff being unable to contact the LSO, they must immediately report any urgent concerns directly to the relevant host organisation (if off-site) or the Police.

5.3. Record Keeping

Clear and accurate records ensure there is a documented account of the project's involvement with a child and well kept records provide an excellent underpinning to good child protection practice.

Disclosures or suspected abuse should be fully recorded on the "Disclosure Form" and kept in the "Disclosure File" on the secure Google drive. The forms can be found at appendix 1. Every project leader carries those forms within their project pack.

5.4. Photography and Video

Many of our educational projects and productions are photographed and videoed. We may wish to make a photographic record of activities for a number of reasons, including the promotion of our work, the compilation of reports and archival purposes.

In order to safeguard children, we adhere to GSA's Data Protection Policy by:

- Seeking written consent from parent / carer for children under eighteen or up to 25 for vulnerable young adults who have been deemed unable to make such decisions at the time of request in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005, or from the leader of the group, or from individual participants (as appropriate) for participants over eighteen. The consent form gives permission to take the photographs or film in the first place, and to use it for specified purpose(s);
- Ensuring that images of children are stored securely ;
- Ensuring that only images of children are taken with permission from Parent or Carer.

Please refer to our Data Protection Policy for further details.

6. Online Safety

We believe children should be able to use the internet, social media or mobile devices for education and personal development, but safeguards need to be in place to ensure they are kept safe at all times and that as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices.

These guidelines apply to all staff, volunteers, children and young people and anyone involved in GSA's activities.

We recognise that:

- the online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however it can also present risks and challenges
- we have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online
- we have a responsibility to help keep children and young people safe online, whether or not they are using GSA's network and devices
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to online safety.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- appointing an online safety coordinator [this may or may not be the same person as our nominated child protection lead]
- providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online through our Social Media Policy
- supporting and encouraging the young people using our service to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others
- supporting and encouraging parents and carers to do what they can to keep their children safe online

- developing an online safety agreement for use with young people and their parents/carers
- developing clear and robust procedures to enable us to respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour, whether by an adult or a child/young person
- reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly ensuring that usernames, logins, email accounts and passwords are used effectively
- ensuring personal information about the adults and children who are involved in our organisation is held securely and shared only as appropriate
- ensuring that images of children, young people and families are used only after their written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given
- providing supervision, support and training for staff and volunteers about online safety
- examining and risk assessing any social media platforms and new technologies before they are used within the organisation.

If online abuse occurs, we will respond to it by:

- having clear and robust safeguarding procedures in place for responding to abuse (including online abuse)
- providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of abuse,
- including bullying/cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation
- making sure our response takes the needs of the person experiencing abuse, any bystanders and our organisation as a whole into account
- reviewing the plan developed to address online abuse at regular intervals, in order to ensure that any problems have been resolved in the long term.

7. Code of Conduct

Green Shoes Arts expects all staff working with children and young people to work from a child-centred perspective. It means that children should be:

- Listened to and heard
- Valued and respected as individuals
- Respected for their identity
- Encouraged and praised
- Involved in decisions as appropriate

7.1.General Guidelines

The following guidelines are designed to protect children from harm, as well as to protect Green Shoes Arts' staff from unfounded allegations of abuse. They are a guide for Good Practise for all Green Shoes Arts projects.

Arts Council England recommends that artists/arts facilitators do not allow themselves to be in sole charge of children. Sole charge means having unsupervised contact – this might be only for a few minutes while a teacher, youth leader or care worker leaves the room to take a telephone call, or for

more extended periods. In case host organisations have requested staff to be in sole charge of the participants, Green Shoes Arts requires at least two GSA staff present in each session, a point of contact present in the setting and also the host organisations guidance on their supervision policy and conduct.

- Avoid spending time alone with children, away from others. Meetings with individual children should take place as openly as possible. If privacy is needed, the door should be left partly open and other staff informed of the meeting.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. For example, discourage children from sitting on your lap. There are occasions of course when physical contact is necessary or desirable, such as comforting a distressed child, or as part of a drama or dance sequence.
- Physical contact should only take place with the consent of the child and the purpose of the contact should be made clear.
- Do not take children alone on a car journey
- Do not meet with children outside organised activities, unless it is with the knowledge and consent of parents / carers and the person in charge of Green Shoes Arts and the host organisation (school or youth club etc).
- Ensure that personal relationships with other leaders do not affect your leadership role.

Green Shoes Arts staff should never:

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horse-play;
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- Make sexually suggestive comments in front of, about, or to, a child, even in fun;
- Let allegations made by a child go without being addressed and recorded;
- Deter children from making allegations through fear of not being believed;
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves;
- Invite a child or young person to visit or stay with you at home;
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts;
- Rely on their own good name to protect them.

8. Lead Safeguarding Officer

Green Shoes Arts' Lead Safeguarding Officer is:

SAM MILLER

Email: sam@greenshoesarts.com

Green Shoes Arts' Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer is:

VICKI BUSFIELD

Email: vicki@greenshoesarts.com

Head Office Address: Chadwell Heath Community Centre, 255 High Road, Chadwell Heath RM6 6AS

In the unlikely event of members of staff being unable to contact Sam Miller or Vicki Busfield, they must report any urgent concerns directly to the relevant host organisation or local Social Services or Police.

9. Next Review Date: April 2022