

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy & Procedures

## Recognising and Responding to Child Abuse

At Wild Arts, we are vigilant about identifying signs of child abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, peer-on-peer abuse, and female genital mutilation (FGM). We take all concerns seriously, whether raised by adults or young people themselves.

## Disclosure and Reporting

- Direct Disclosure: When a young person directly informs another person about an incident of abuse.
- Indirect Disclosure: When signs or behaviours suggest potential abuse, even if not directly communicated.

Information sharing is on a need-to-know basis only to ensure confidentiality and the safety of the child.

## Disclosure Procedure:

- Adults must be available to talk to and create a comfortable environment for the child to share any concerns they have.
- Adults must listen carefully to the individual reporting the concern.
- Adults must respond supportively, reassuring the child that they have done the right thing by talking to us. Reassure the individual that their report will be taken seriously
- Young people disclosing abuse should not be questioned further, or pushed to provide more information.
- Open questions should be used to avoid the child agreeing with an adult out of fear. Never use leading questions, or yes or no questions and never rephrase or assume information about what the child has said.
- Do not promise to keep secrets but assure confidentiality to the extent possible, informing only those necessary for ensuring the child's safety.
- Staff should maintain the attitude to report any concerns, no matter how seemingly minor. A small piece of information shared may form part of a wider picture.

## Reporting and Referral Procedure:

- Reports are recorded and written word for word, immediately after the disclosure to avoid missed or forgotten details, and must include as much information as possible without compromising the above statements.
- Reports are signed and dated by the staff member and should be written in a formal manner in case of use in an official context.
- Concerns and disclosure reports should be reported to the Wild Art's designated safeguard lead, Mariana Peron (see Names in Contacts section).

- Safeguarding and general concerns about a young person's welfare are recorded and stored as soon as possible by a Designated Safeguarding Lead in the appropriate secure folder.
- Referral to the Integrated Front Door is made as soon as possible but within 24 hours. Their contact information can be found at the top of this document and a printed copy of this policy will remain on site.
- Concerns are discussed with parents at the earliest opportunity unless doing so would endanger the child.
- Staff may seek advice from the first response if unsure about making a referral.
- Referrals must include factual information, witness details, and the child's address, among other necessary details using the Safeguarding Concern Form.

### Mitigating Potential Risks to Children:

At Wild Arts we recognise there may be potential risks to children at our setting, we control these risks by undertaking the following procedures:

- Contracts with parents are established prior to sessions starting so parents are informed of their responsibilities, and keep us up to date with essential information on the child.
- Wild Arts have a register to check in children at the beginning of each session. Parents must inform staff if a child is unable to attend a session in advance. Emergency contact details are available at the setting in case of loss of internet connection.
- Policies and procedures are in place for emergency situations, including extreme weather conditions, fire, missing child and behaviour policies. All staff read and ensure understanding prior to working with children.
- See staff suitability and training section for those working with children
- We involve and empower children to recognise and respond to potential risks to raise their awareness and engage them in understanding about their environment.
- Our curriculum includes teaching children about safeguarding, and we tailor our approach to meet the needs of all children, including those who may be more vulnerable.
- At Wild Arts we implement risk assessments for each activity and assessing risks in each environment e.g atelier, yard, camping field and forest. These are checked prior to the session and ongoing with children and reviewed regularly.
- We have some non-negotiable rules in place including staying together. We explain to the children we need to 'see and hear one another at all times'. (Return call "1,2,3 come back to me")
- We regularly check all children are accounted for via regular head counts
- We maintain high adult:child ratios

### Situations where a child may be at risk:

- If a child has made a disclosure which we feel puts them at risk of immediate harm we will inform the police by calling **999**
- If the child's parents or primary caregiver turns up intoxicated Wild Arts will refuse to hand over the child, and instead get in touch with the emergency contact as provided by parents in their contract.
- Wild Arts will refuse collection of children other than to the named parents or caregivers. If a new person is collecting we expect the parents to inform us in person or in writing prior to collection and the collector will need to provide ID
- If the parent/caregiver is late for collection and has not contacted us to inform us, we will call them to find out their whereabouts, and if necessary contact the child's emergency contact for collection. A member of Wild Arts staff will stay with the child for as long as necessary.
- If the parent/primary caregiver is consistently late: Discussions will be held with the parent, and they may be charged additional costs for late pick ups, and if this persists this may form reason for a referral.
- If a child does not show at setting when they are scheduled to, and the parent has not informed us within 15 minutes of the session starting we will call the parents to find out why. If a reason cannot be provided or the parent can not be reached we will contact the Education Welfare Service.

### Understanding Child Abuse and Safeguarding Procedures

At Wild Arts, we prioritise the safety and well-being of every child. To achieve this, it's crucial for all staff members to understand the different forms of child abuse and the procedures for addressing concerns.

### Defining Child Abuse

Child abuse encompasses intentional harm inflicted by adults or other children, whether physical, sexual, emotional, or neglectful. It can occur in various settings, including online platforms.

### Safeguarding Definition

Safeguarding involves protecting children from harm, ensuring their physical and mental health, and promoting their overall welfare. It includes actions to prevent maltreatment and support children in achieving positive outcomes.

### Types of Abuse

Abuse can manifest in different forms:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

## Recognising Signs of Abuse

Staff members will be provided with detailed information (Tes ) on recognising signs of abuse and specific safeguarding issues, such as child exploitation. This knowledge equips them to identify and respond to concerns promptly.

## Procedures for Addressing Concerns

When staff members suspect or hear allegations of abuse, they must act immediately and follow established procedures listed in this document.

## Handling Concerns

We ensure all decisions prioritise the best interests of the child, involving parents and relevant authorities when necessary. Our approach is grounded in preventing harm, promoting welfare, and achieving positive outcomes for every child.

## Creating a comfortable environment

At Wild Arts we encourage children and parents to be open about their wellbeing, offering time and space for personal discussions where appropriate, and supporting where we can. This is an active effort to ensure children and adults feel safe and heard, and welcome to share concerns if they arise.

## Safer Recruitment Practices

To maintain a safe environment for children, we adhere to stringent safer recruitment processes. This includes conducting statutory child protection checks, such as right-to-work checks, identity verification, reference checks and enhanced DBS checks with 'barred list' information for most appointments. We also utilize the DBS Update Service and may review publicly available information on candidates as part of the recruitment process.

## Training and Support

Our Staff Handbook contains a comprehensive code of conduct that outlines expected standards of behaviour for all staff members. This code ensures the safety and well-being of both students and staff and must be adhered to at all times.

Staff will receive training on recognising and responding to various forms of abuse, including guidance on sharing information and maintaining confidentiality and including induction training that covers key policies and procedures.

Staff training will be ongoing to ensure staff are up to date and to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to safeguard children effectively.

The DSL receives updated Level 3 child protection training at least every two years to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfill their role effectively.

### Contextual Safeguarding

We recognise that safeguarding incidents may occur outside our immediate environment. Therefore, staff members consider the broader context in which incidents occur, sharing relevant information with appropriate agencies to ensure a comprehensive safeguarding approach.

### Dealing with Low-Level Concerns or Allegations

At Wild Arts, we maintain robust procedures for addressing low-level concerns or allegations involving teachers and other staff members. It's essential to respond promptly and effectively to any behaviour inconsistent with our staff code of conduct. Here's how we handle such situations:

#### Definition of Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern involves behaviour that:

- Contravenes the staff code of conduct outlined in the Staff Handbook.
- Does not meet the threshold for formal allegations or referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

#### Importance of Addressing Low-Level Concerns

While low-level concerns may seem minor, addressing them is crucial to maintaining a culture of openness, trust, and transparency within our community. Even seemingly small issues contribute to the overall well-being and safety of our students.

#### Reporting Low-Level Concerns

We have a separate Reporting Low-Level Concerns Policy that provides detailed guidance on how to report such concerns. Staff members can self-refer concerns using any format, whether written or verbal, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs). All self-referrals are logged and recorded for further action.

#### Documentation and Record-Keeping

All concerns, discussions, and decisions related to safeguarding are recorded using Safeguarding Concerns Forms, which are securely stored and accessible only to authorised personnel. This ensures transparency and accountability in safeguarding practices.

Safeguarding information should be shared with a new school or college in line with [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE) 2021 paras 105 to 113.

### Oversight of Safeguarding

Mariana Peron and Samantha Sheldrake oversee all safeguarding matters within the setting. They ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated in accordance with statutory guidance. Additionally, they liaise with local statutory agencies and other relevant parties to address safeguarding concerns effectively.

### Appendix 1 – Signs and Types of Abuse

We provide detailed guidance to staff on recognising signs of abuse and differentiating between various types of abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and online exploitation. This information equips staff to respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns and ensure the well-being of our students.

For this reason, incidents can either be classified as 'aggravated' or 'experimental'. [The DDCMS / UKIS guidance "Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people"](#) sets out the classification of incidents, and how each should be handled.

The statutory guidance aims to improve professionals' understanding of domestic abuse and ensure that all victims, including children, receive the support they need. It outlines the signs of domestic abuse, including those specific to children, such as changes in behaviour, anxiety, and emotional distress.

Professionals working with children should be aware that domestic abuse can have a profound and lasting impact on children's physical and emotional well-being. Children who witness domestic abuse may experience trauma, fear, and a sense of helplessness. They may also develop behavioural problems, struggle academically, or have difficulties forming healthy relationships in the future.

Professionals need to respond sensitively and effectively to children who are affected by domestic abuse. This may involve providing emotional support, helping children access appropriate services, and working collaboratively with other agencies to ensure their safety and well-being.

Additionally, professionals should be aware of the risk factors associated with domestic abuse, including substance abuse, mental health issues, and social isolation. Early intervention and support can make a significant difference in mitigating the impact of domestic abuse on children and families.

Overall, safeguarding children from domestic abuse requires a coordinated and proactive approach from all professionals involved in their care. By identifying the

signs, providing support, and working together, we can help ensure that children affected by domestic abuse receive the protection and assistance they need to thrive.

NICCO offers resources and guidance to professionals working with children who have family members in prison, aiming to mitigate the negative impacts of parental incarceration on children's well-being and development.

It's essential for schools and other professionals to be aware of the needs of children with family members in prison and to provide appropriate support and resources to help them cope with their circumstances. This support may include access to counselling services, peer support groups, and educational programs tailored to their needs.

### Updates

This policy will be continuously reviewed and up to date to keep in line with best practices and guidance will help ensure its effectiveness in protecting children from harm.

### Legislation:

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022) ("KCSIE")
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (September 2018)
- o What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (March 2015)
- o KCSIE Part Five: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment (September 2022) ("SVSH")
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) ("WT")
- Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services (July 2018)
  - Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (April 2021)
- The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (August 2015)
- The Use of Social media for online radicalisation (July 2015)
  - Relationships education, relationships, and sex education (RSE) and health education (July 2020)
  - The DDCMS / UKIS guidance "Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people" (December 2020)
  - Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Guidance 13<sup>th</sup> Sep 2021 released under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and Section 403 of the Education Act 1996

## Conclusion

By recognising the unique challenges faced by children with family members in prison and providing targeted support, schools and professionals can play a crucial role in helping these children navigate their circumstances and achieve positive outcomes.

In summary, safeguarding children requires a comprehensive and proactive approach that addresses a wide range of potential risks and vulnerabilities. By staying informed about the various safeguarding issues outlined in this document and working collaboratively with other agencies and professionals, the setting can create safe and supportive environments where children can thrive and reach their full potential.