

2. Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults procedure

The procedures set out in this document have been endorsed and approved by the Trustees of PLOT 22 and are applicable to all Trustees, paid workers and volunteers. They relate specifically to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect.

Scope

The different roles and responsibilities with regard to safeguarding all those visiting or working at PLOT 22 are set out in the project's Risk Strategy and Health and Safety Policy, but it is important to stress how this broader differentiation of roles and responsibilities impacts on the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

In particular, all children and vulnerable adults visiting or working at the project will be referred by an organisation, a mentor, key worker or other responsible adult and it is the responsibility of those persons to:

- Carry out a proper risk assessment of the extent to which any individual that they are proposing to bring to the site might pose a risk to any other people who may be at the site including children and vulnerable adults.
- Ensure that children and vulnerable adults know how to behave when attending the project, for example induction into the site rules.
- Monitor and evaluate the behaviour of those they are responsible for.
- In the case of working with schools or organisations, PLOT 22 will request a signed Service Level Agreement making clear that should a child or vulnerable adult protection concern be raised by PLOT 22 it will be the responsibility of the school / organisation to follow up with Social Services as necessary.

Defining safeguarding - "the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm - is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play". (Working Together to Safeguard Children Department of Education 2013)

Defining child protection - the government defines child protection as; "a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm". (Working Together to Safeguard Children Department of Education 2013)

Defining abuse and neglect - detailed definitions of abuse and neglect and how to recognise them are set out in the 'Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures' (2006) and the 'Sussex Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults' (2007). Both of these documents can be downloaded from the Brighton and Hove City Council website. For the purposes of these procedures, short definitions of forms of abuse and neglect of children are provided below:

- Physical abuse: this may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child
- Emotional abuse: this is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development
- Sexual abuse: this involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening
- Neglect: this is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development.

These short definitions are drawn from the 'Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures' (2006). Although definitions of abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults are somewhat different, for the purposes of these procedures the above definitions - suitably modified - are adequate for understanding what might constitute the abuse or neglect of a vulnerable adult.

Guidance in respect of confidentiality and information sharing - Trustees, paid workers and volunteers should, where possible, respect the wishes of children, or vulnerable adults, who wish particular information or conversations to be kept confidential. But sometimes a balance has to be struck between respecting a child's or vulnerable adult's wish for confidentiality and the need to safeguard the welfare and safety of that child or vulnerable adult.

The safety and welfare of a child or vulnerable adult must be the overriding consideration, so staff and volunteers must always consider safety and welfare when deciding whether information about them should be shared. If it is felt that information should be shared, the agreement of the child or vulnerable adult to that information sharing should be sought. But information should always be shared,

without consent if necessary, if it is felt that the safety or welfare of a child or vulnerable adult is at risk.

Responsibilities of all PLOT 22 staff and volunteers with responsible roles:

- Having considered the above guidance in respect of confidentiality and information sharing, if any paid worker or volunteer has any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or a vulnerable adult they should immediately report their concerns to the Safeguarding Lead and Project Director (or Safeguarding Deputy, if absent) and where appropriate, to that person's mentor, key worker or other responsible adult straightaway (please see Contact List in Appendix for Safeguarding Lead/Deputy contact details).
- If any paid worker or volunteer has any concerns about the behaviour or actions of any person working at or visiting the project, they should report their concerns to the Safeguarding Lead (or Safeguarding Deputy, if absent) and, where appropriate, to that person's mentor, key worker or other responsible adult straightaway (see Contact List in Appendix).

Responsibilities of PLOT 22: PLOT 22 must ensure that:

- There is always a named person and deputy who have clearly defined roles in respect of the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. This named person is presently Safeguarding Lead and Project Director, Emma Houldsworth. The Safeguarding Deputy is Trustee, Bunty Dann.
- The named person will have successfully completed suitable training (updated every 3 years) so as to enable them to identify and make referrals to appropriate professional agencies and keep appropriate secure records and will cascade this to the deputy and other volunteers with responsible roles.
- PLOT 22 has a strict lone working policy and procedure. Paid workers and volunteers must not work alone with children or vulnerable adults unless they have an enhanced DBS check.
- Currently, the Project Director is responsible for ensuring that necessary DBS checks are carried out and reapplied for every 3 years.

- Where it has not been possible to obtain a necessary DBS check for a paid worker or volunteer, they will not work unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults.
- All paid workers and volunteers working with children are monitored and supervised and have opportunities to learn about safeguarding children and vulnerable adults in accordance with their roles and responsibilities.
- Activities will comply with staff to child ratios considered safe and appropriate for the age of the children participating.
- Any complaint regarding the behaviour of any paid worker, Trustee or volunteer will be dealt with by Safeguarding Lead, or Safeguarding Deputy, as soon as is practicable. See Contact List in Appendix.

Responsibilities of Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy, if absent)

- In the event of someone expressing concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or a vulnerable adult or about the behaviour or actions of any person working or visiting the project, the Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy, if absent) should immediately discuss these with any relevant mentor, key worker or other responsible adult and, where necessary, refer these concerns to the appropriate agency/agencies. Under no circumstances should any volunteer/staff take concerns directly to any other agency without consulting the named Safeguarding Lead or Deputy first.
- The Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy if absent) will record details of any incident, concerns or referral on a Record of Concern Form, which will be stored securely, away from the project site. Specific details on these forms will be kept for a period of six years.
- The Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy if absent) will ensure that, as appropriate, all children and vulnerable adults are told about the safeguarding policies and procedures of the project and that she is the person to approach if they have concerns. Similarly, she will ensure that all persons visiting or working at the project are aware of how they can make a complaint about unacceptable and/or abusive behaviour towards children or vulnerable adults (see attached procedure documents).

