

Groundswell Arts Safeguarding Policy

Policy Originator: Gareth Howells
Last Reviewed: April 2020

Key Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Gareth Howells
Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Angeline Conaghan

Local Authority Contacts

Single Point of Access: 020 8489 4470
Emergency Out of Hours: 020 8489 0000
Local Authority Designated Officer: 020 8489 2968 lado@haringey.gov.uk
Haringey Local Safeguarding Children's Board: 020 8489 1472 lscb@haringey.gov.uk

Groundswell Arts is fully committed to promoting children's rights, notably their right to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation and to be involved in any decisions that directly affect them. Groundswell Arts has a duty of care to implement effective policies and procedures for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people. In order to achieve this we ensure our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

Groundswell Arts will:

1. Ensure that all workers understand their legal and moral obligations to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation.
2. Develop best practice in relation to the recruitment and safer recruitment guidelines of all workers (paid staff and volunteers)
3. Provide all newly appointed workers (paid and unpaid) induction training, which gives an overview of the organisation's purpose, values, structure and services, and deliver yearly refreshment workshops.
4. Ensure that all employees (paid and unpaid) undergo an Enhanced DBS check in accordance with their role and responsibilities.
5. Ensure that all workers understand their responsibility and agree to work to the standards and procedures detailed in the organisation's Child Protection procedures.
6. Ensure that all workers understand their obligations to report care or protection concerns about a child/young person, or a workers conduct towards a child/young person, to the organisation's designated person for child protection.
7. Ensure that all procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner.
8. Ensure that the designated child protection officer understands his/her responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies

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9. Work to protect all employees (paid and unpaid) and young people we work with from situations which might be unsafe, particularly by ensuring that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people
10. Ensure that the organisation meets all its responsibilities in adhering to the requirements of the Safeguarding/Protection of Children in accordance with The Protection of Children Act 1999, The Sexual Offences Act 2000 and The Children Act 2004
11. Provide opportunities for all workers (paid and unpaid) to develop their skills and knowledge particularly in relation to the care and protection of children and young people.
12. Ensure where applicable that children and young people are enabled to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues and will have access to the organisation's complaints procedures.
13. Endeavour to keep up to date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children and young people.

Child Protection Procedures.

Introduction

Groundswell has implemented these procedures to ensure that all concerns about the care and protection of children/young people are effectively managed, this applies for both young people and staff employed by the company.

All staff employed (paid or unpaid) by Groundswell Arts are required to proactively implement the child protection procedures. All persons working with young people in accordance with the law of the land have a duty to do what is reasonable to safe guard children's health, development and welfare.

Groundswell Arts has a commitment to children's rights, notably their right to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation and to be involved in any decisions which directly affect them.

The Companies Directors (currently Angeline Conaghan, and Gareth Howells 10/07/19) in collaboration with departmental staff are responsible for developing and reviewing the organisations' Child Safeguarding/Protection policy statement and other care and protection policies and guidelines. This shall happen provisionally on an annual basis or in response to any significant developments/changes in the law.

Groundswell Arts are committed to equal opportunities in all aspects of the company's work.

Section 1

Staffing

Recruitment

All applicants (paid/unpaid) will be subject to a rigorous selection process. This will include a

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cover letter and CV in application, followed by a series of interview(s) with the companies directors. Recruitment for permanent posts will be advertised on our website and elsewhere in order to ensure equal access. We aim to be proactive in our approach to recruitment to promote equal opportunities. Potential employees will be asked to provide 2 referees, which the company will contact, any record of contact will also be kept on file. Employment will be pending a DBS check through the London Borough of Walthamstow. The level of DBS check will reflect the nature of their work in school/organisation/setting.

Training

All staff paid or unpaid working with Groundswell Arts on a project involving young people will be required to undertake a period of training and induction. The nature of this will reflect their previous personal experiences and needs. Training will take many forms reflecting the needs of all individuals.

All staff must familiarise, agree and sign a declaration agreeing to the organisations child protection policies and procedures. All newly appointed workers (paid and unpaid) will complete an agreed probationary period, at the end of this period the company will review their position with the employee and at least 2 members of staff.

The company will provide the following according to their role and responsibility:

- The details of the structure of the organisation
- Details of the organisations aims and objectives
- The roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers within the organisation
- Clear details of the expectations, roles and responsibilities of all newly appointed staff and volunteers
- Training, information and a copy of the organisations code of conduct will be Provided
- The contact details and roles and responsibilities of the organisations Child Protection Officer will be provided

Online – Workshops and projects

Groundswell Arts run a number of projects that can be conducted online via live meeting platforms. In addition to Groundswells Safe Guarding policy in schools, freelance artists will be give training and instruction on how to conduct this work in virtual space.

1. Email address and login information

Any artist asked to conduct interviews will be given a Groundswell Arts email address to use as their log in so as to avoid any personal address being shared with clients. Groundswell Arts shall moderate any emails that are received through these addresses

2. Being mindful of your online profiles

Before teaching online, artists should protect themselves from accidental inappropriate contact by restricting their profile on each video calling app you use, so that it does not automatically accept contact requests and cannot be viewed by clients. User profiles should feature the groundswell arts Icon and this shall be given to artists when creating their log in.

Artists should encourage clients to restrict their own profiles so that they can only receive calls from known contacts. It may be possible to avoid the need for clients to have profiles at all by sending them email invites to a live video call once you have set this up. Either way of working can be made safeguarding compliant.

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3. Staying professional during the call

Artist should establish a serious and professional manner when working online. Emphasise to clients that video calling apps are for lessons only and not for other contact, e.g. sharing photos or general messaging. Artists should dress as they would when teaching face to face. Consider the background that the clients will see, and carry out a video check from your camera to see what is visible. A neutral background is best – minimise mess and don't put anything too personal on display.

It may be necessary to widen the frame depending on your needs, so care should be taken that the frame is well chosen and appropriate. Artists may wish to use your chosen app's blurred background setting.

Do not allow clients to wear excessively informal attire or present against a messy background. If this happens, the call should be terminated and the reason communicated afterwards. The same applies if a client behaves inappropriately, and it may be necessary to take further action if this happens, just as you would with a face-to-face lesson.;

4. Lesson observations and recordings

If working with Children it maybe possible to ask parents to remain in the room during the lesson as an added precaution, although this may not always be possible or desirable. A better alternative is perhaps for a parent to be nearby. In all cases, parents should be fully informed that online teaching is happening and given information about appropriate practice relating to it. As employers we would ask parents to consent forms when agreeing to take part in the project.

Many video calling apps allow calls to be recorded. Groundswell Arts normally advises against recording sessions because of the risk of personal data being held indefinitely. However, we recognise that this maybe appropriate in some situations.

If an artist records a session, they must ensure that clients (and Groundswell Arts Management) have consented to the recording being made, and artists will try to record audio only. These recording should be delete after the session has taken place or at the first opportunity after the project.

Section 2

Recognising and Dealing with Abuse of a Child / Young Person

Groundswell is committed to safeguarding the children and young people with whom it works. This section gives all staff some general guidance on types of abuse and neglect and potential signs of abuse/neglect. This is not definitive if staff are in any doubt or have questions they should talk to the lead teacher at the school and to Groundswell's child protection officer.

The first step in helping abused or neglected children is learning to recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect. The presence of a single sign does not prove child abuse is occurring in a family, but a closer look at the situation may be warranted when these signs appear repeatedly or in combination.

Signs of abuse

Children and young people often find it very difficult to talk about the abuse they are experiencing. So adults have a vital role to play in looking out for the possible signs.

Although it is sometimes hard to be 100 per cent certain that a child is being abused, here are some of the signs to watch out for:

- A baby who cries constantly.
- A child who is often bruised or injured.
- A child who is often very withdrawn.
- A child who is often very dirty or smelly.
- A child who is often hungry, or under or over-dressed for the time of year.
- A child who is often left at home alone.
- A child who is often left in unsafe situations, or without medical attention when they need it.
- A child who is constantly 'put down', insulted, sworn at or humiliated.
- A child who seems very afraid of particular adults, and reluctant to be alone with them.
- A child who has unexplained changeable emotions, such as depression, anxiety or severe aggression.
- A child who shows sexual knowledge or behaviour that is inappropriate for their age.
- A child who is growing up in a home where there is domestic violence.
- A child who is living with parents or carers who are involved in serious drug or alcohol abuse.

In some cases these signs may have an acceptable explanation.

On the other hand, this list does not cover every possibility. You may see other things in the child's behaviour or circumstances that worry you. The most important thing to remember is that if you have a gut feeling that something is not right, trust your judgement and take action as outlined below.

Procedures for responding to concerns about abuse /neglect

The following section gives advice to staff on the procedures that Groundswell has in place for staff to report if they have concern that a child/young person may be experiencing abuse or neglect.

Staff should in all instances

- Make a written record of the observations or the information received. This should be done with the child protection officer/named person after discussion, the document should be signed, dated and stored securely.

The child protection officer/named person will seek advice from children's services and refer to the relevant authorities , police, social services, NSPCC.

If a child/young person has alleged that they are being abused

Staff should make a written record of the observations or the information received. This should be done with the named person after discussion, the document should be signed, dated and stored securely.

The child protection officer/named person will seek advice from children's services and refer to the relevant authorities , police, social services, NSPCC.

Follow your company procedures.

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If a child/young person discloses information regarding allegations of harm, you should do the following.

Stay calm.

Listen carefully to what is said.

Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.

Allow the child to continue at their own pace.

Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.

Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you

Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared

Record in writing what was said using the child's own words, as soon as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure the record is signed and dated.

In projects where staff are working with a partner school or organisation, this organisation should have their own child protection policies and procedures and a named person whose role it is to handle these concerns. Staff should listen to the child/young person and they should then talk immediately to the named person in the school, unless the allegation implicates the named person, in which case they should refer the matter directly to Groundswell's Child Protection Officer. In any case, they should also inform their line manager and ensure they have details of the incident.

If staff receive a third party report that a child/young person is being abused/neglected they should

Make a written note of their observation(s) and inform the schools child protection officer/named person. Sign and date the record and store securely. The named person will inform and or seek advice from children's services. Staff should always follow company procedures. In projects where staff are working with a partner school or organisation, this organization should have their own child protection policies and procedures and a named person whose role it is to handle these concerns. Staff should listen to the child/young person and they should then talk immediately to the named person in the school, unless the allegation implicates the named person, in which case they should refer the matter directly to Groundswell's Child Protection Officer. In any case, they should also inform their line manager and ensure they have details of the incident.

If a concern is raised that a child/young person is being harmed or abused by a worker within the company

This can be an extremely difficult issue to deal with. It can be difficult to accept that a colleague may deliberately harm a child. It may also be that the behaviour that causes concern is bad practice rather than abuse. When a concern arises, there are three processes that may need to take place.

These are:

A child protection investigation.

A criminal investigation.

Action by the company to discipline or remove the member of staff.

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It is important that these are properly co-ordinated and that events are managed in the right order. For this reason, the company will take no immediate direct action against a staff member of the company without the advice and agreement of the investigating agencies (e.g. the police, NSPCC or Social Services), except where such action is necessary to protect a child. If you have concerns about a fellow worker you should speak to the named person in the company, if the complaint is against the child protection officer then this matter should be referred to the company's Director Angeline Conaghan (numbers shall be given).

If, following consideration and any consultation, the concern clearly is about bad practice rather than abuse, the Child Protection Officer will advise corrective or disciplinary action against the member of staff against whom the allegation has been made.

Irrespective of the outcome of the Police and Social Services investigations, the company may consider suspension and/or disciplinary action in accordance with its usual disciplinary procedure.

Section 3

Summary of the referral process to child protection agencies

In the event that the company needs to refer a case or information to child protection agencies, this will be done by the

Designated child protection officer Gareth Howells (07951167768).

In the event that the named person is unavailable then this duty will fall to the

Deputy designated child protection officer Angeline Conaghan- (07960955985).

If none of these people are available, but the child/young person is at immediate risk of harm, staff should contact the following agencies.

Local Authority Contacts

Single Point of Access:	020 8489 4470
Single point of access out of hours	0208 489 0000
Local Authority Designated Officer	020 8489 2968 lado@haringey.gov.uk
Haringey Local Safeguarding Children's Board	020 8489 1470 lscb@haringey.gov.uk

Action of whatever form should always be swift, following procedure and be in complete confidence to ensure those involved are protected and treated fairly. The company will always seek advice from protection agencies and will never directly investigate any claims.

It is important to note that as the company exists presently, projects will always be in collaboration with a school or organisation, they will have their own child protection policy and officer who may be better positioned in relation to the case to refer to the agencies. Staff should however always inform their line manager of any incident they're involved in.

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If the parent/carer is alleged to have harmed a child then the company will decline from any contact with the parent/carer until they sought the appropriate advice from the relevant protection agencies. Any communications should be referred to the company's named person.

Section 4

Protection of workers who report care and protection concerns

The company has implemented this policy to ensure that children and young people taking part in its activities and projects are safeguarded. Staff should never fear the actions of those who have been implicated in abuse or harm nor let this be a barrier to reporting suspected abuse or harm. The law of the land protects the companies Staff from this type of action as long as reports are neither malicious nor vexatious.

Section 5

Data Protection and management of confidential information

The company respects the rights of both its staff and the children/young people who take part in its activity. The company regards all matters regarding the safeguarding of children and young people as highly confidential in its nature. Unless a child young person is considered at risk of abuse or harm this confidentiality will be maintained

With regard to information related to such matters all files and documents shall be stored in a secure place and files will be subject to restricted access. The named person, Gareth Howells - Company Director in collaboration with the company Director Angeline Conaghan will be responsible for managing this.

Groundswell Arts requires all participants to view and sign their ethics and consent form in relation to the sharing of material co-created on projects
Project participants are required by Groundswell Arts to complete a full media release
In cases where parents and carer's do not want children to be photographed we are kept informed and will avoid all pictures of said children during sessions and events.

Section 6

Review of Child Protection policy and procedures

Groundswell recognises that its current policy has been written to reflect the activity of the company and the needs of participants at this point in time. It recognises a need to keep informed of any changes in legislation and company activity and seeks to ensure policy is relevant and updated and transparent.

Review of policy will be completed annually by Designated Child Protection Officer Gareth Howells.

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