

Safeguarding Policy

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Matrix Arts Centre.

The purpose of this policy

To protect children and young people who receive Matrix Arts Centre's services, including children of adults who use our services; and to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

Matrix Arts Centre believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education Act 2002
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years - Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government 2014
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015
- Working together to safeguarding children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government 2015

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues

- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

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

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for children and young people
- adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording and storing information professionally and securely
- using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistle-blowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Sarah Ashfield
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