



Safeguarding Policy

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1. Introduction, a trauma-informed approach to safeguarding

Starcatchers takes a trauma-informed approach to safeguarding, seeking to have a positive effect on mental health and wellbeing. This means that all staff are required to understand trauma-informed working practices and apply them in all delivery. By placing the wellbeing of those we work with at the heart of our practice, safeguarding becomes an everyday, positive interaction with our participants. It also extends to how we treat each other in the team. By having the perspective that focuses on progressing wellbeing, we are safeguarding before issues are at a level of disclosure or reporting.

When specific issues and incidents arise, this policy holds a clear and safe process for protecting those with whom we work.

Starcatchers provides a variety of opportunities for babies, children, young people and, in some cases, vulnerable adults, to engage in the arts through four core pillars of activity:

- **Artist Development (Playspace, New Work Development and Productions and Touring) –** Provide opportunities for artists to explore their practice as well as seed, develop, produce, and tour high quality, innovative productions and experiences across Scotland, and the rest of the world.
- **Community Engagement** – Community engagement programmes offering consistent contact between artists, very young children and their parents and carers.
- **Early Years Development** – Professional development programmes that build confidence and capacity in the Early Years workforce and projects in Early Years settings.
- **Advocacy** – Delivering campaigns, messages and learning that raises awareness of the positive impact access to the arts and culture from birth can have on children’s development and overall wellbeing.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that every child, from birth, has the right to be safe, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. Starcatchers takes a children’s rights approach, ensuring that the activities and opportunities it delivers meet these standards. The UNCRC was incorporated into law in Scotland in March 2021.

The definition of who is a child can vary. For the purposes of working with Starcatchers, a child is anyone under the age of 18 and also care-experienced young people under 26.

This policy also takes into consideration Vulnerable Adults In Scotland, an adult at risk is defined as someone aged 16 years and over who is unable to safeguard their own wellbeing, property, rights or other interests and is at risk of harm¹. This includes individuals who are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, and are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected. A vulnerable adult is someone aged 18 or above who may need community care services for reasons like mental health issues, disability, age, or illness, and is considered more ‘vulnerable’ because they may not be able to protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

This policy is based on the following key publications:

1. Children and Young People Act Scotland 2014 (2021);
2. Protecting Disabled Children from Abuse & Neglect 2014;
3. Protecting Vulnerable Adults (Scotland) Act 2007;
4. Creating Safety (in the Arts) 2019.

Designated Child Protection Officer: Judith Anderson 07976 531 117

It is everyone’s responsibility to report concerns immediately to the DCPO.

Child Protection Officers:

Rhona Matheson 07739 504 958

Amy Hall Gibson 07947 568 586

Digital and Online Safety: Sarah Leary 07597 388 824

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Call this number if you, as an adult, have any questions about Child Protection and need support about what to do.

For full contact lists of who to call in an emergency, please see Appendix D.

The Child Protection Policy is publicly available on the Starcatchers' website in a condensed version.

The full Child Protection Policy forms part of the Terms & Conditions of each contract of work.

The children who participate in our work have a voice in Starcatchers' activities and understand their rights – including their right to be safe – through their lived experiences interacting with our Team.

The families with whom we work have access to our Policy and understand our commitment to safeguarding.

2. Policy Statement

Starcatchers believes it is always unacceptable for a baby, child, young person or vulnerable adult to experience abuse of any kind. As an organisation we recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all babies, children, young people and vulnerable adults and commit to a practice that protects them. We believe everyone has a responsibility to understand and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and to ensure that all those participating in Starcatchers activities feel safe, comfortable and respected. For the purpose of working with Starcatchers, children are all those under 18 and also care-experienced young people under 25.

We will make sure that all babies, children, young people and vulnerable adults have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity. Starcatchers recognises the additional discriminations and vulnerabilities caused by the intersectionality of these characteristics as well as with class, poverty and legal status.

This policy applies to all employees, freelancers and Board members of the charity. This includes all staff, artists and creative practitioners. For the purpose of this Policy they will be referred to as the Team.

The aim of this policy is to promote good practice by providing babies, children and young people and vulnerable adults with safety and protection while participating in Starcatchers' activities. Although Starcatchers activities will always take place with parents or carers alongside their babies or children, Starcatchers still has a duty of care to safeguard all children from harm. Starcatchers also works with young people who are parents, and some who may be seen as vulnerable or identify as such.

Starcatchers also works with adults – including older parents, professional practitioners and other carers – and has a duty of care to ensure they are safe from harm. Our care for adults is covered in our

Health & Safety Policy, as these individuals do not fall under the legislative category of being 'vulnerable adults' within the Safeguarding context.

The Team will be trained to make informed and confident responses to specific issues about the wellbeing of a baby, child, young person or vulnerable adult. The Team has a responsibility to report concerns immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer.

The following rights-based principles should underpin all interaction with children:

- The best interests of the baby, child, young person or vulnerable adult are a primary consideration.
- All are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.
- All have the right to express their views on matters that affect them.
- All have the right to protection from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

3. Purpose of this Policy

- To provide protection for the babies, children, young people and vulnerable adults participating in Starcatchers' activities, including the children of Team members.
- To provide the Team with clear processes for Child Protection and Safeguarding.

4. Legislation

This policy is in compliance with the 'Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014; the Protecting Vulnerable Adults (Scotland) Act 2007; the National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland 2014; Protecting Disabled Children from Abuse & Neglect 2014; and Creating Safety 2019.

Starcatchers is an authorised signatory registered with Disclosure Scotland, the vetting and barring scheme that processes PVG checks.

The key legislative framework supporting the protection of children includes:

Duty of Care

Section 5 of the **Children (Scotland) Act 1995** states that "it shall be the responsibility of a person who is 16 or over and who has care and or control of a child under 16, to do what is reasonable to safeguard the child's health, development and welfare."

For Starcatchers, this creates a **duty of care** to safeguard the welfare of children who participate in Starcatchers' activities.

Preventing unsuitable persons from working with children

The **Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003** (POCSA) aims to improve safeguards for children and vulnerable people by preventing unsuitable persons from working with them. The Act provides for Scottish Ministers to maintain a list of persons unsuitable to work in a child care position in either paid employment or as an unpaid volunteer.

Starcatchers has a **recruitment procedure** to uphold the requirements of the Act. The Team working in a position that involves direct contact with children will be required to join Disclosure Scotland’s Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme.

Criminal Liability

Section 12 of **Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937** states that criminal liability can arise where an adult “wilfully assaults, ill-treats, neglects, abandons or exposes the child ... in a manner likely to cause [the child] unnecessary suffering or injury to health.”

Guidance indicates that harm does not actually have to occur in order for there to be criminal liability – it is sufficient that harm is likely to occur. Starcatchers recognises the importance of developing a culture of **risk awareness** amongst its The Team.

5. Scottish Government Policy

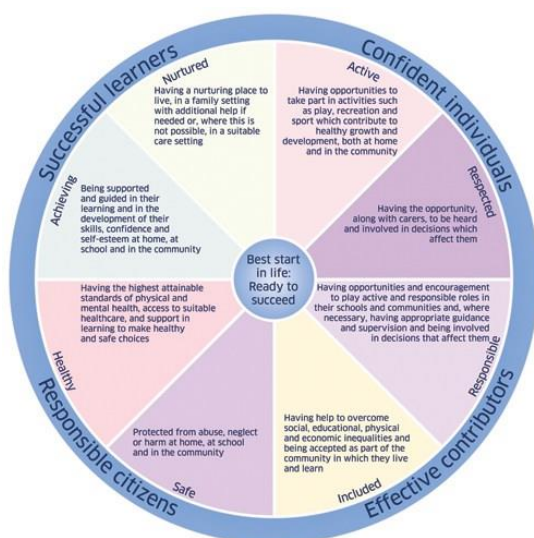
Child protection has to be seen in the context of Scotland’s Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach and Early Years Framework, as well as the global UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), currently being incorporated into domestic law in Scotland.

GIRFEC promotes action to improve the wellbeing of all children in the eight SHANARRI areas. These wellbeing indicators state that children must be supported to be: healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included and, above all in this context, safe.

The primary indicator for child protection is to keep a child safe and, in so doing, attention is given to other areas of wellbeing as appropriate.

Starcatchers uses the SHANARRI wellbeing wheel to assess each concern, observation and disclosure it receives.

The DCPO will work with the person raising the observation or concern to mark which wellbeing indicator is being affected. Appendix E gives the template for the Disclosure Report Form.



6. Definition of Abuse

Abuse is usually categorised into four types, as outlined below. Child abuse may be repetitive or serial or may be an isolated case. The majority of abuse is committed by people who have a close, trusting relationship with a child, for example; parents, relatives and friends. Abuse by stranger's accounts for only a very small percentage of cases.

The Starcatchers Team will be trained in Child Protection (usually the NSPCC's Introduction to Child Protection) at the start of their employment. This training is refreshed every two years. The DCPO also undertakes training in specific to the role.

Physical abuse

Any deliberate act of physical harm to a child or young person by the person having care or charge over the child. This could also include a deliberate failure to protect a child from physical danger. Also includes children who hurt themselves/other children.

Emotional abuse

Where children are harmed by constant lack of love and affection. Emotional abuse includes taunting, shouting, ridiculing, negative criticism, threats, verbal attacks or complete absence of affection towards the child. Also includes racial abuse by adults. This is often the most difficult to recognise, but it can have a profound effect on children and young people.

Neglect

Where carers fail to meet the basic needs of the child or exposure of a child to danger that seriously affects his or her health and/or development. This could failure to provide adequate food and clothing and/or fail to ensure that appropriate medical treatment is obtained or that a child is appropriately supervised.

Sexual abuse

Involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children or adolescents in sexual activity they do not fully comprehend and to which they are unable to give informed consent. Can also include prostitution and ritual abuse.

In addition, children can also find themselves in abusive situations caused by, for example, drug or alcohol misuse, bullying, domestic violence, verbal abuse, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

7. Signs of Abuse

Being aware of signs and indicators of abuse is essential if we are serious about seeking to protect children from harm and abuse. However, in many cases the signs will not be clear cut and decisions about what action to take can be difficult. The following is a list of things to look for that may indicate something is wrong:

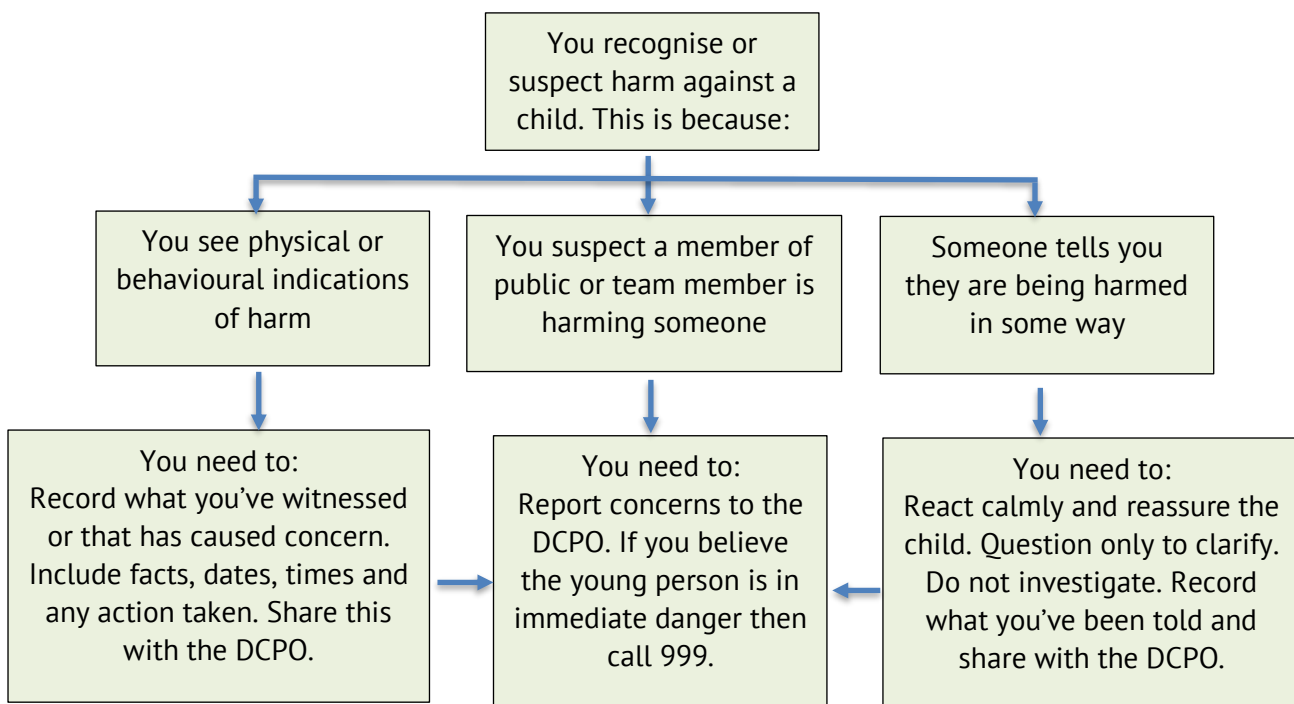
- Sudden and significant change in a child's personality and/or behaviour
- Sudden withdrawal from others
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations (for example: hand or finger prints, bruising on the face or neck, lower back)

- Extreme anger or sadness
- Fear of strangers
- Aggressive behaviour
- Attention seeking behaviours
- Lack of self-esteem
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age
- Self-injury
- Depression
- Signs that a child is not being cared for properly, such as consistently being inappropriately dressed for the weather, hunger, or poor personal hygiene.

For a fuller list please see Appendix C.

These indicators do not conclusively mean that a child or young person is being abused. However, we do know that children and young people who have been abused may sometimes react in some or all of these ways.

8. Reporting Procedure



It is your responsibility to immediately inform the Designated Child Protection Officer but remember: if you have believe a child or young person is in immediate danger you should call 999.

9. Managing Concerns and Disclosures of Abuse

If you are concerned that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm or they have made a disclosure of abuse:

Do not attempt to investigate

Investigation into the disclosure of abuse is the responsibility of the police and/or social work departments.

Never promise confidentiality

Do not promise to keep a secret until you know what the secret is – there are good and bad secrets. If someone asks you not to tell anyone what they have told you, explain that, in concern for their wellbeing, you have to pass this information on but that it will be to as few people as possible. Tell them who will be told and, to the best of your knowledge, explain to them what will happen next.

Listen

Allow them to tell their story. Do not intervene or feel you have to fill in any silences. **Do not press for more information.** The golden rule is to listen and keep questions to a minimum. Show that you are listening by being fully attentive.

Do not ask closed or leading questions

Some people, particularly children and some vulnerable adults, like to please and be seen to say the right things. Closed or leading questions can lead to children, young people and vulnerable adults agreeing to or saying things that they think we want to hear. Closed questions can also mean that the information could be deemed to be 'contaminated' evidence. Open questions (who? how? what? when? where?) ensure that we don't put words into people's mouths. You only need to establish the basics of what happened and what (if any) risk still remains.

Be neutral and non-judgmental

It is worth remembering that even when children, young people and vulnerable adults have been abused by their parents, they usually still love them and do not want to hear them condemned by another person. Remember that they may be telling you about something scary or frightening for them and your calm, neutral and supportive reaction is important.

Reassure

Keep in mind that they may have been told not to tell anyone about this. Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you, that they have done nothing wrong and that you and others are going to help them.

Write down what you have been told/your concerns

As soon as possible after a disclosure or concerning observation, you should write it down, exactly as it was told to you; use the phrases they used. Do not try to write it down while they are telling you their story as this may frighten them into clamming up and it also means you cannot give them your full attention. Please see Appendix E for a standard form on which to record the disclosure.

Report the disclosure to your Designated Child Protection Officer

It is the responsibility of this person to pass the information on to the appropriate authorities and to consult with them on any immediate action that should be taken to ensure the safety of the child or young person.

Please remember that disclosures of abuse may come online as well as in person. Regardless of the manner of disclosure, our process and procedure is the same. Please see Appendix A for more information about online safety.

Remember the 4 R's
RECOGNISE
RECORD
REPORT
REFER

The Board receives a full report of every escalated Child Protection issue and ensure that OSCR is informed appropriately and timeously.

10. Role of the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO)

The role of the DCPO is to provide advice and support to the Team on all safeguarding matters and to liaise with the appropriate statutory organisations. It is their responsibility to pass information of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse on to the appropriate authorities and to consult with them on any immediate action that should be taken to ensure the safety of the child or young person or vulnerable adult.

However, it is not the responsibility of DCPO or any other member of the Team to carry out an investigation.

The DCPO should:

- maintain good relations with relevant individuals in the statutory organisations
- keep up to date with developments in child protection training and guidance issues
- provide basic training to all team members in the organisation and provide support and guidance on safeguarding concerns
- report immediately to the relevant statutory organisation any disclosure or suspicion of abuse or risk of abuse
- be responsible for the secure storage and appropriate sharing of recorded information
- monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the safeguarding policy

If you have any concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult you should discuss these immediately with Starcatchers contacts:

Judith Anderson, Designated Child Protection Officer judith.anderson@starcatchers.org.uk
Head of Development & Operations 07976 531 117

Lead responsibility for dealing with disclosures and/or safeguarding concerns, policy development, good practice and training.

Amy Hall Gibson, Child Protection Officer amy.hallgibson@starcatchers.org.uk Early Years
Development Manager 07947 568 586

Team leader for those delivering activities with children, young people and vulnerable adults

Sarah Leary, Communications & Marketing Manager sarah.leary@starcatchers.org.uk

Lead responsibility for online safety, GDPR and website compliance

Rhona Matheson, Chief Executive rhona.matheson@starcatchers.org.uk
Safeguarding Officer to be contacted when the DCPO is not available

If these contacts are not available and you feel someone is in immediate danger, please dial 999.

If the child, young person, or vulnerable adult is not in immediate danger but you need urgent advice, please contact the relevant Local Authority Child Protection or Social Work team or Partner provider (contact information is provided in Appendix D).

If you are concerned about someone's welfare, discuss your observations with the DCPO. Trust your intuition and do not keep things to yourself. Remember it is not your role to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, but it is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to follow through on any concerns.

11. PVG Checks & Supervision

Starcatchers requires all those working directly with children to be a member of Disclosure Scotland so that Starcatchers can run PVG checks before work begins. Starcatchers is an Authorised Signatory for regulated work with children.

It is not currently an Authorised Signatory for regulated work with vulnerable adults and therefore cannot run checks for those working with vulnerable adults. While vulnerabilities are threaded across society, Starcatchers' activities do not currently meet the Disclosure Scotland definitions of providing regulated work with vulnerable adults. We do, however, take the safety of our adults into consideration in our Health & Safety Policy, including Mental Health.

Guests and visitors do not need PVG-checked and should always be with team members.

Child Protection must be included in Risk Assessments.

PVG checks will be updated annually and budgeted for within multi-year projects and core costs.

As well as delivery practitioners, the management team will also be required to have membership with Disclosure Scotland and will be PVG-checked every two years. This is to reflect that safeguarding responsibilities lie with the project managers.

As safeguarding sits at the heart of good governance, the Board will regularly discuss Child Protection and ensure that at least two individuals are registered with Disclosure Scotland have an annual PVG check for Starcatchers. Charity Trustees are also responsible to oversee Duty of Care and Misconduct of the charity, which a Safeguarding issue would fall under.

Artists, creative practitioners, and coordinators delivering directly with babies, children and their grown-ups will be supervised by the relevant senior manager. The managers should promote open channels of communication and make it clear to all team members that they should feel free to contact them at any time if a concern arises.

Supervision procedures for all Community Engagement team members will follow the following format:

- Project Coordinators will meet with artists for planning sessions before a block of activity begins and then regularly throughout the year. This will ensure that everyone is familiar with the Child Protection policy and are able to clarify any issues or concerns.
- Where the Project Coordinator is also the artist, these sessions will take place with the Head of Development & Operations or another relevant line manager.
- All artists will complete a session evaluation report for the Project Coordinator which will provide them with an opportunity to feedback on their experiences of working with the group and discuss any issues that arise.
- Where the Artist is also the Project Coordinator, these session reports will be shared with the Head of Development & Operations or another relevant line manager.

The Chief Executive and Board will ensure Child Protection/Safeguarding remains on the Risk Register.

12. Allegations

It is often not easy for people to accept that abuse could occur within their own organisation and/or that someone they know and work with could cause harm. Good practice in both the recruitment and supervision of the Team should reduce the risk of abuse; however, the possibility of an allegation being made against a member of the Team cannot be eliminated and must never be ignored.

If someone tells you that a member of the Team has caused them harm, this should be treated in the same way as any other disclosure. Remember the most important consideration is always the wellbeing and best interest of the child, young person or vulnerable adult. The disclosure should be recorded in exactly the same way as in any other circumstance and the information passed on to the Designated Child Protection Officer who will follow the normal referral procedure and will additionally the report the matter to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive should follow normal disciplinary proceedings and will discuss with HR before suspending the member of the Team concerned until the situation has been investigated.

These procedures are in place first and foremost to protect and promote the wellbeing of victim but should also reassure the Team that there is a consistent and predictable response to allegations of abuse.

13. Promoting Safe Practice

Starcatchers maintains a Company Handbook that provides a Code of Practice for all those involved in the organisation. In addition, all the Team receive this Policy as part of their induction, making clear their role in implementing the policy. In particular, the Team are made aware of the basic rights of children to be treated with dignity, respect, and impartiality.

The Board approves updates to policies, procedures, guidance, and practices.

Our commitments to Safeguarding are published on the website, both the Policy and also reflected in the charity's mission statement and values.

Recruitment

As required by legislation, everyone working in a position that involves direct contact with children or managing projects for children will be required to join Disclosure Scotland's Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme. See Section 10.

Code of Conduct

See Appendix B for Code of Conduct and Good Practice.

Training

Starcatchers will ensure that the Team receive appropriate training in Child Protection issues. Child Protection Training forms part of the mandatory training for all team members starting with the organisation and is refreshed every two years. Specific training, for example in digital safety, is organised as required.

Support

It is vital that everyone working with children, and those that manage these projects, have adequate support and training. They should feel able to discuss any issues or concerns and will be provided with clear opportunities to do so in order to explore practice issues in relation to child protection to ensure the health and wellbeing of children who access Starcatchers' activities.

Incidents

If during any Starcatchers activity, there is an incident affecting a child that requires medical treatment and a teacher/parent/carer is not present, an ambulance will be called. An appropriate adult who will remain with the child until the teacher/parent/carer arrives will accompany the child in the ambulance.

It is Starcatchers' policy that under no circumstances should a child be taken to hospital in a Team members' or volunteer's car.

Details of medical incidents must be recorded in the Incident Book and reported to Starcatchers' first aid worker. Incidents of a non-medical nature should also be noted in the Incident Book.

Managing Intimate Care Needs

Intimate care commonly involves meeting toileting and medical needs. It is Starcatchers' policy that intimate care needs are met by the child's parent/carer.

Use of Photographs and Images of Children

Starcatchers recognises that photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information. This information can make the child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to 'groom' the child for abuse. Starcatchers also recognises that photo images are adapted by certain individuals and groups for inappropriate use. It is therefore Starcatchers' policy that

- Where photos of individuals are to be published, the name of the child will not be printed with the photograph.
- Where it is felt to be important to publish a child's name, a photograph will not support this.
- Where group photographs are published, individual children will not be named.

Data Protection & Storage of Confidential Records

Starcatchers recognises its responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Information relating to child protection issues will be stored in a secure folder on the server. Access to this information will be restricted to Starcatchers' Designated Child Protection Officer and Chief Executive.

Starcatchers is aware that data protection regulations allow for disclosure of information without the consent of the subject in certain conditions, including for the purposes of prevention and detection of crime or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. The need to safeguard children will always be considered within these parameters.

Review

Starcatchers will monitor and review this policy every year, and when there are relevant changes in legislation or circumstances.

Appendix A – Online Safety and Social Media Policy

This policy refers to all members of staff in the organisation.

Roles and responsibilities

- The Communications Manager is responsible for overseeing and coordinating social media accounts across all relevant platforms as part of the Audience Development strategy.
- The Marketing and Communications Coordinator has day-to-day responsibility for scheduling and posting across social media platforms, particularly with reference to Creative Skills.
- The Early Years Development Manager may use the Creative Skills twitter account to promote and provide information from time to time.
- Programme Leads are responsible for identifying and assessing any additional risks related to social media usage within their own groups, particularly with regards to child protection, family safety etc, and documenting these in line with Company risk assessment procedures.

Employees should always refer questions regarding social media to the Communications Manager.

Aims

Starcatchers aims to:

- Protect children and young people involved with our organisation.
- Provide guidance regarding Social Media usage and information about responding to incidents.
- Make sure to operate within our values and the law.
- Ensure appropriate behaviour on our Social Media platforms and internet presence.

Usage of internet and Social Media

Using internet and Social Media includes:

- Understanding safety aspects about the usage of all forms of digital communication (websites, social media, apps etc.) on whatever device (computer, smart phone etc.)
- Understanding what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour online
- Ensuring that we adhere to the law when using online media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.

- Regularly reviewing existing safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that online safeguarding issues are fully integrated, including:
 - making sure concerns of abuse or disclosures that take place online are written into our reporting procedures.
 - Incorporating online bullying ('cyberbullying') in our anti-bullying policy"
- Providing training for staff members responsible for managing Starcatcher's online presence

Rules and guidelines when using or engaging with Starcatchers' social media:

- Employees are welcome to identify themselves as employees of Starcatchers on their personal social media platforms and to participate in social media engagement with Starcatchers', but it is advisable that they place a disclaimer, for example: 'all thoughts and opinions are my own' in their biographies or 'about me' sections. Alternatively, employees may use separate social media accounts for their personal lives and professional business.
- All new employees will be provided with a copy of the social media policy.
- Employees should never disclose non-public and confidential information about the organisation, its staff, volunteers, and most importantly its service users.
- We will not name service users in photo descriptions.
- We will not provide any identifying information on social media such as home addresses, school name, workplace, telephone numbers.
- We will not provide any information about future private schemes on social media publicly, such as events, appointments, locations or the like.
- We will never 'tag' personal profiles on Facebook or Instagram, only including professional organisations, venues, or groups. Should employees wish to tag themselves in photographs they will need to be reposted with permission from the Communications Manager.
- All associate artists, lead and guest artists and participants of community engagement projects will be provided with a copy of Starcatchers' external social media policy.
- We will ensure employees and associate artists are aware of appropriate levels of contact with participants/audience members on social media. Artists and staff members should not be 'friends' on social media with participants whilst working for Starcatchers.
- Participants' contact details will only be collected for the purposes of communications regarding all relevant projects and/or productions.
- We will ensure all staff, artists, workshop leaders, participants, and any other relevant members of the organisation, take responsibility for child protection, and report anything that could mean a child is at risk to the Designated Child Protection Officer.
- Inappropriate posts will be removed, followed by an explanation why, with the aim to raise awareness of safety aspects when using internet/ social media.
- We always seek parent/carers written permission before taking images of any children attending our events. We will never publish a child's full name or other personal details along with their picture.
- We always seek written permission from participants or their legal guardians to communicate with them through social media and other communication opportunities (email, phone).

Expectations when using digital technology to communicate.

All employees are expected to be aware of these guidelines and follow them when posting either on behalf of the organisation or on their own social media accounts when tagging or referring to Starcatchers.

- Employees should be aware of this policy and follow it

- If there are any queries, questions, or concerns about the usage of internet or social media, employees should get in contact with our designated online safeguarding lead.
- Employees should not befriend participants on social media while working with the charity.
- Employees should make sure posted content is appropriate. They should check and update privacy settings regularly.
- Communication with service users should not happen via the employees' personal accounts but via official organisational accounts, profiles, websites, as a face-to-face conversation or through email or in writing.
- General information or abrupt changes can be communicated via social media, e.g. reminders or sudden changes, whilst personal/sensitive content should be communicated in a more formal way.
- Employees should avoid responding to participants outside our office hours.
- Messages/ texts of all kinds should be signed off in a professional manner.
- Any disclosures of abuse reported through social media should be dealt with in the same way as a face-to-face disclosure, according to our reporting procedures (see Child Protection Policy)
- Photos should be preferably taken only with official Starcatchers devices or must be deleted directly after storage and usage, e.g. posting on social media.
- If an employee sees participants taking pictures/ recordings they will remind them of respecting private lives of others and not take or pass on pictures of other people without permission.

Good practice

Starcatchers encourages all staff to consider the following, if and, when posting either on behalf of the organisation or on their own social media accounts when tagging or referring to Starcatchers:

- Consider: is this related to Starcatchers' mission statement, aims or objectives?
- Be the best person you can be online. Be courteous and respectful of other people and their views, religions and cultures.
- Be an online ambassador for Starcatchers.
- Please respect copyright and trademark regulations. When using someone else's content, please give them a mention and if using their work always seek their approval.
- If in doubt don't post or comment.

Child Protection

We all have a responsibility to do everything possible to ensure that children are kept safe from harm. If you come across anything online that could mean a child is at risk, you should report it as soon as possible.

- Make a note of the URL of the webpage or social media post you're concerned about
- Take screenshots if you can.
- Complete the Safeguarding Disclosure Form with as much information as you can
- Send these to the Designated Child Protection Officer and Online Safeguarding Lead

Key Contacts

Designated Child Protection Officer

Judith Walsh Head of Development & Operations Judith.anderson@starcatchers.org.uk

Lead responsibility for dealing with disclosures and/or child protection concerns, policy development, good practice, and training.

Rhona Matheson, Chief Executive rhona.matheson@starcatchers.org.uk

Digital Communications Support

Sarah Leary, Communications Manager sarah.leary@starcatchers.org.uk

Review

Starcatchers are committed to a regular review of our social media activities and impact, engaging all members of staff and the Board in this process.

Appendix B – Staff Code of Conduct & Good Practice

Code of Conduct

Those who work for Starcatchers in any capacity, including those who come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults but also managers and Board members with overall Safeguarding and Child Protection responsibility, are required to adhere to the following code of conduct and good practice.

You should:

- Treat all babies, children, young people and vulnerable adults with dignity and respect
- Be a good role model
- Respect their right to personal privacy
- Encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity
- Actively encourage children, young people and vulnerable adults to be involved in any decisions which affect them
- Be aware of the ‘double’ vulnerability of certain groups of people to abuse and harm (e.g. those who have mobility and/or communication disabilities; those with developing language skills or English as a second language etc).
- Encourage babies, children, young people and vulnerable adults to say/show when they are being asked to do things which create fear or discomfort (socially, emotionally and/or physically).
- Ensure that parents/carers are always present during activities involving their children or that you are at least within sight or hearing of them. Where this is unavoidable, it should always be in the presence of other colleagues and participant families.
- Develop skills which will enable you to listen sensitively and carefully to the views and ideas of all children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Report immediately any suspicion that anyone could be at risk of harm or abuse.
- Listen carefully to anyone who discloses abuse and follow this immediately by taking action in line with this policy and procedure.
- Carry out proper health and safety risk assessments for all activities.
- Share essential information necessary to ensure the safety of children and young people and vulnerable adults with other team members involved (e.g. name, address, contact telephone numbers, special medication requirements and/or medical condition where applicable).

- Written parental/guardian consent should be obtained for participation in specified activities.
- Ensure that your social networking profiles (e.g. Facebook) are set to Private, so that young people cannot view or interact with you through this medium. Where it is necessary to communicate with young people through social networking sites this should be done through a Starcatchers account which should not include any of your personal details.
- Seek to build effective and equal partnerships with parents/carers.

You should not:

- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact.
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts.
- Permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. initiation ceremonies, bullying, ridiculing).
- Show favouritism to any individual.
- Make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures.
- Display images of a sexual, violent or abusive nature.
- You must not permit any photography, video or still, of anyone where a photo consent form has not been completed by the parent/carer .
- 'Friend' or 'follow' the participants you are working with on social media sites (e.g. Facebook) or allow them to do this to you.
- Give out your personal contact details (including phone numbers, address or email) to people you are working with.
- Allow a child, young person or vulnerable adult to visit your home.
- Be on your own with a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Give child, young person or vulnerable adult a lift home or to an event in your car.
- Accept someone's personal assurances that an individual is safe to work directly with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes.
- Rely on just your good name to protect you.
- Believe that abuse does not take place in your local community.

Good Practice Guidelines

Starcatchers is committed to providing high quality and fun, artistic and creative experience for our participants. It is our hope that all participants enjoy the experience of taking part in activities and feel that they are in a safe and supportive environment.

As such, Starcatchers expects all staff, freelance artists and Board members to treat others with dignity and respect and will not tolerate any bullying or discrimination at any time.

It is your responsibility as a member of Starcatchers team to foster a positive and open ethos in your session and to adhere to the following:

- Lead by example in terms of behaviour, use of language, professional conduct and interaction with others.
- Ensure that the working space is safe and free of any hazards.
- Ensure there are always two team members working with each group.
- Never put yourself in the situation where you are alone with a baby or child. In the event that this is unavoidable ensure another member of the team knows where you are.
- Ensure that you are aware of all health and safety procedures.
- Familiarise yourself with the Child Protection Policy and all related procedures.
- Be responsible in the selection of material which you use in workshops.
- Be responsible in the selection of activities used in workshops.
- Use appropriate language at all times.
- Never offer a participant a lift home.

Remember:

The health, safety and wellbeing of all people is our priority at all times.

This is the children and young people who participate, as well as their adults, and includes everyone in the Starcatchers' team.

Appendix C – Indicators of Abuse

Possible signs and indicators of physical abuse

- Injuries, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to explain and discuss injuries
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Fear of medical help particularly on the part of the parent who may seem reluctant/make excuses for not taking a child to the GP
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Black eyes
- Bruising on the soft parts of the body – thighs, upper arms, buttocks
- Bruising around the neck area
- Physical aggression towards others
- Physical aggression towards self – hitting and telling self off for doing something wrong

Possible signs and indicators of neglect

- Constant hunger
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging
- Emaciation
- Constant tiredness
- Poor personal hygiene

- Poor state of clothing and/or child inappropriately clothed for the weather
- Untreated medical problems
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance

Possible signs and indicators of sexual abuse

Children between the ages of five and twelve may:

- Hint about secrets they cannot tell
- Say that a friend has a problem
- Ask if you will keep a secret if they tell you something
- Seem to be keeping secret something which is worrying them
- Begin lying, stealing, blatantly cheating in the hope of being caught
- Have unexplained sources of money
- Exhibit sudden inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn or regressing to younger behaviour patterns
- Stop enjoying previously liked activities such as music, sports, art, scouts, guides
- Be reluctant to undress for gym
- Have terrifying dreams
- Act in a sexual way, inappropriate to their age
- Draw sexually explicit pictures depicting some act of abuse
- Start wetting themselves
- Have urinary infection, bleeding or soreness in the genital or anal areas
- Have soreness or bleeding in the throat
- Children from the age of twelve onwards may:
 - Be fearful about certain people like relatives of friends
 - Assume the role of parents in the house to such an extent that they are taking care of everyone's needs except their own
 - Not to be allowed to go out on dates or have friends round
 - Find excuses not to go home or to a particular place
 - Run-away frequently
 - Have unexplained sums of money
 - Have recurring nightmares/be afraid of the dark
 - Exhibit a sudden change in school/work habits, begin to truant
 - Be fearful of undressing for games/gym
 - Become withdrawn, isolated or excessively worried
 - Have outbursts of anger or irritability
 - Be chronically depressed
 - Be suicidal
 - Use drugs or drink to excess
 - Self-harm
 - Develop eating disorders
 - Exhibit inappropriate sexual/seductive behaviour
 - Have recurrent genital/urinary/anal infections/bleeding

- Have chronic ailments such as stomach pains and headaches
- Become pregnant
- Have a friend who has a problem and then tell about the abuse of the friend
- Sexually abuse a child, sibling or friend

Possible signs and indicators of emotional abuse

- Fear of parents being contacted
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Physical, intellectual and emotional development lags
- Significant decline in concentration
- Sudden speech disorders
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour
- Self-harm
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing/scavenging
- Indiscriminate friendliness
- Socio-emotional immaturity

Domestic abuse, alcohol and substance abuse

The team should be aware of the need to recognise that domestic abuse and alcohol and substance abuse can have serious and long-term effects on children.

In addition, it is now recognised that there is a strong link between domestic abuse and child abuse and indeed between cruelty to animals and child abuse.

Appendix D – Contact Details

Starcatchers, WHALE Arts, 30 Westburn Grove, Edinburgh EH14 2SA (office and registered address)

NSPCC advice helpline 0808 800 5000

Edinburgh City Council Social Care Services 0131 200 2324

socialcaredirect@edinburgh.gov.uk

Opening Hours Monday-Thursday: 8.30am - 5pm and Friday: 8.30am - 3.55pm

Out of hours Emergency Social Work Service 0800 731 6969
Monday-Thursday: 5pm - 8.30am and Weekends: 3.55pm Friday - 8.30am

Fife Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership 01592 583690

Fife Public Protection Unit 01592 418460 [Online form link](#)

Fife Council Social Work Centre 03451 551 503

Voice UK is a national charity supporting people with learning disabilities and other vulnerable people who have experienced crime or abuse. Its helpline for carers, parents and professionals can be reached on 0808 802 8686, Monday to Friday between 0900 to 1700 BST, e-mail helpline@voiceuk.org.uk or text message 07797 800 642.

Mencap Learning Disability Helpline provides advice and information on all issues relevant to people with learning disabilities and their families in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Contact the helpline by phone on 0808 808 1111.

Enable Scotland is a leading charitable organisation for people who have a learning disability in Scotland. It also provides personalised services and links to advocacy as well as information and expert advice. Its direct helpline is for people who have learning disabilities, their carers and family members. E-mail enabledirect@enable.org.uk or call 0300 0200 101.

Respond is a national charity that supports children and adults with learning disabilities who have experienced abuse or trauma. Respond provides therapeutic support as well as practical advice and information. Its helpline is for people with learning disabilities themselves as well as family, carers and professionals supporting them and can be reached by e-mailing admin@respond.org.uk or calling 0808 808 0700.

The National Autistic Society is a leading UK charity for people with autism – including Asperger's syndrome – and their families. It provides information, support and campaigns for a better world for people with autism. Persons with autism or their families or carers are free to contact them by phone on 0845 070 4004 Monday to Friday between 1000 and 1600 BST.

The charity **Sibs** provides information and support to people growing up with – or have grown up with – a brother or sister with any disability, long term chronic illness or life limiting condition. E-mail info@sibs.org.uk for more details.

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation provides telephone and e-mail support from a Family Support Worker on challenging behaviour associated with severe learning disabilities and related issues. There are also DVDs and information sheets about support for people who have a severe learning disability and behaviour described as challenging (resources are free of charge to family carers). Contact them by phone on 0845 6027885 or email: info@theclub.org.uk.

ARC (Association for Real Change) is a membership organisation, which supports providers of services to people with a learning disability. It provides a range of services such as high quality information, networking opportunities, training and publications, and CRB checks. The contact telephone number is 01246 555 043, or e-mail at contact.us@arcuk.org.uk.

[Child Exploitation and Online Protection](#) website is the first port-of-call for reporting online abuse.

Advice about online safety

Avaproject.org.uk, UpStream, Thinkuknow, NSPCC, SWGFL, saferinternet.org.uk
internetmatters.org, The 5 rights framework, Safe CIC

Further Advice

OSCR, The Charity Commission and Scottish Government all list Safeguarding advice and what constitutes a 'notifiable' event.

Appendix E – Safeguarding Disclosure Form

In the event that you have any concerns about a child or young person, a disclosure of abuse is made to you or you suspect abuse is taking place, you should report these to the Designated Child Protection Officer as soon as possible, and use this form to record the nature of the disclosure or your concerns.

In the unlikely event of a disclosure from a vulnerable adult, please follow these steps. Safeguarding situations for adults are often unclear and require common sense approaches.

If you have a concern that a child is in immediate danger then you should call 999.

- Report your concerns to the Designated Child Protection Officer
- Do **NOT** investigate the disclosure or your suspicion further
- Record the nature of the disclosure or your concerns using this form
- The Designated Child Protection Officer will then make a referral to the local partner, health visitor, social work department or the police and will seek advice on how to manage the immediate situation.
- Once this advice has been obtained, appropriate support will be offered to the child or young person and, where appropriate, the carer or parent.

Name of child:

Date of Birth:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Names of parents/carers:

Names and ages of other siblings (if known):

Any special circumstances related to the child (e.g. special needs, health & welfare issues):

Name of referral group or professional:

Programme engaged with:

Date, Place & Time of disclosure or concerns:

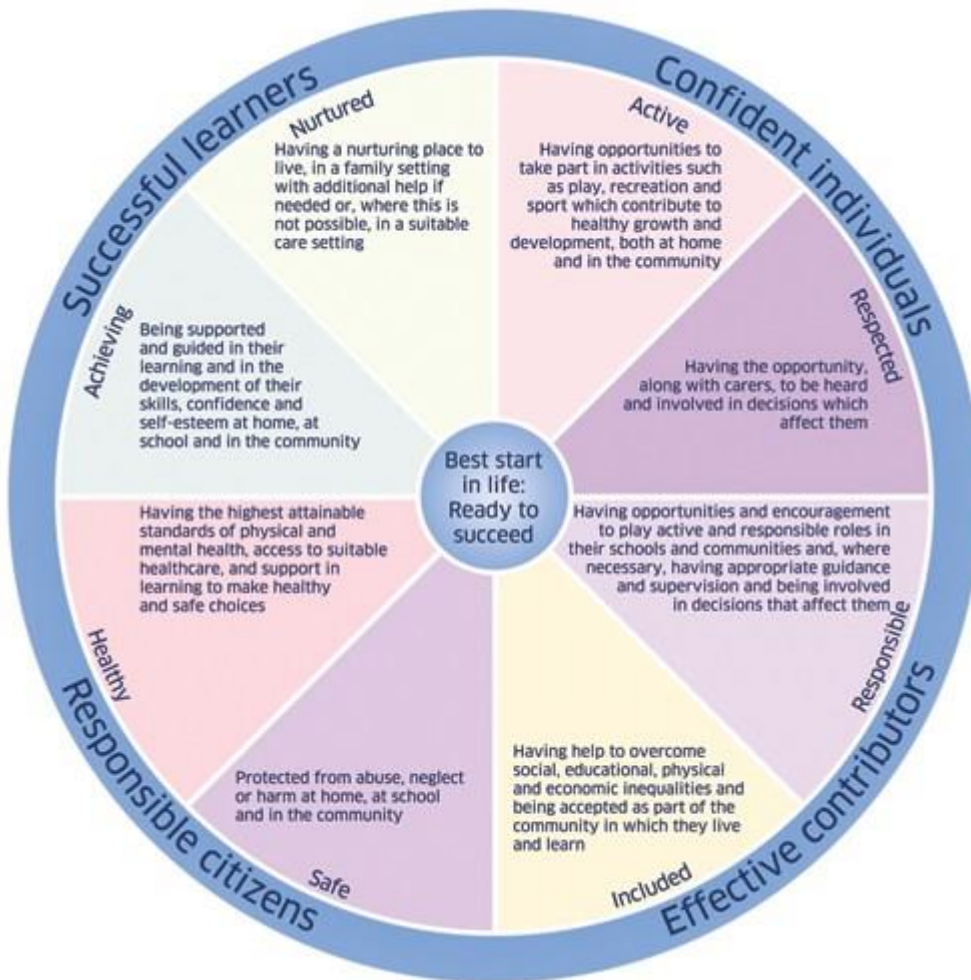
Nature of disclosure or concerns (e.g. could be a disclosure by a child or young person or a suspicion of abuse made by a concerned adult):

NB.

- If a child has disclosed abuse, record as quickly as possible what the child said. Remember that this should be as accurate as possible.
- If an adult has expressed concern at the safety of a child are they expressing their own worries or passing on those from another adult or child? Record their concerns and ask them to confirm that the details are correct.

If the concern is about an incident of abuse to a child, have any possible signs or indicators been identified? Who identified these?

Reflecting on the information above, look at the SHANARRI Wellbeing Wheel and mark the indicators that are affected:



I confirm the information detailed above is accurate and reflects the situation as witnessed in my role delivering Starcatchers activity.

Name:

Role:

Signature:

Date:

Report your concerns and return this form to the Designated Child Protection Officer.

