

CREATIVE YOUTH

Creative Youth Charity

Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Practice

Last Reviewed December 2023

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Introduction:

About this Handbook:

All staff, freelance contractors, board members, volunteers and participants that are involved with Creative Youth must read and comply with all of the policies detailed in this handbook. This document contains an excerpt of the Creative Youth Company Handbook, a full version of which can be provided on request.

If you have any questions regarding the policies in this handbook or require further information on any of the issues discussed, please contact Creative Youth using one of the following contact methods:

Email – hello@creativeyouthcharity.org

Telephone – 020 8549 2120

About Creative Youth Charity:

Creative Youth is a not for profit registered charity that aims to enable young people to realise their potential through the arts. We believe every young person has a right to access the arts and creativity, and should be encouraged to take initiatives, risks and push boundaries in a safe inclusive environment.

A strong focus of what we do is to create opportunities for young people who are often from disadvantaged or “hard to reach” backgrounds to be able to access the arts and culture. We aim to keep most of our programmes and projects free of charge and accessible for every young person.

Our vision is to be recognised in the creative industries as the UK’s leading organisation which supports young people’s engagement in the arts as individuals and as emerging professional artists.

The Key Objectives of Creative Youth are:

- Equip and empower young people with the skills and confidence to both succeed in life and with their chosen careers.
- Celebrate the achievements of young people in the arts and the creative industries.
- Produce high quality programmes and projects that showcase and support young diverse talent.
- Provide career pathways for young people to enter the creative industries and to allow the next generation of artists to flourish.
- Strategically engage with arts, community, educational and business partners along with national and international industry partners in the delivery of our mission.

Creative Youth is a charity based in Kingston, London. As the name implies, it was born out of an ambition to encourage and celebrate the creativity of young people – which we define as ages 5 to 26. We held the first International Youth Arts Festival (now called FUSE International) at the Rose Theatre in 2009, which has grown to become the largest festival of its kind in the UK.

We are a local organisation with an international reach. We have nurtured and showcased a broad range of talent through our festivals, events and training programmes. Thanks to Creative Youth a minimum of 1,500 young people engage with, and benefit from, their involvement in the arts every year. And we're only just getting started.

Next year we will launch a new creative space in the heart of Kingston designed to become a 'Factory of Futures'. Here we will be able to offer a home for young artists and practitioners to create, develop and share their ideas and work. It will also be a hub for our wider arts community, and a home for the newly relaunched FUSE International festival.

Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct:

Introduction:

Creative Youth aims to provide the very best opportunities for children and young people to enjoy and participate in a wide range of high quality artistic activity. To this end, it will actively provide pastoral care in all situations where it is responsible for the safety and well-being of young people below the age of 18, protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm.

Creative Youth will seek to create relationships of trust between young people and responsible adults acting on behalf of Creative Youth, in which young people's views can be expressed and respected.

In order to protect young people, staff and volunteers working on behalf of CREATIVE YOUTH this child protection policy and the following code of conduct should be adhered to at all times and every member of staff and volunteers must read the policy before working with any young people both in person and digitally.

A list of definitions of child abuse and indicators to assist staff in recognising young people who may be suffering abuse is included to assist staff and volunteers in identifying any young people who they feel may be at risk.

When organising or co-ordinating an artistic event both in person and online, CREATIVE YOUTH will provide each participating group a copy of this policy and ensure that they have agreed to it. This policy applies to children and young people from other areas taking part in an event in Kingston, as well as children resident in Kingston.

Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct:

What is Child Abuse:

According to the World Health Organisation, “Child abuse” or “maltreatment” constitutes ‘all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. NSPCC similarly specify “cruelty to children” or “child abuse” as ‘behaviour that causes significant harm to a child.

It also includes when someone knowingly fails to prevent serious harm to a child. All forms of cruelty are damaging –it can be harder to recover from the emotional impact than from the physical effects.’

These definitions therefore point to four types of cruelty

- Physical abuse: including hurting or injuring a child, inflicting pain, poisoning, drowning, or smothering.
- Sexual abuse: including direct or indirect sexual exploitation or corruption of children by involving them (or threatening to involve them) in inappropriate sexual activities.
- Emotional abuse: repeatedly rejecting children, humiliating them or denying their worth and rights as human beings
- Neglect: the persistent lack of appropriate care of children, including love, stimulation, safety, nourishment, warmth, education, and medical attention.

A child who is being abused may experience more than one type of cruelty. Discrimination, harassment, and bullying are also abusive and can harm a child, both physically and emotionally.

Indicators of Abuse:***Generic Indicators:***

A sudden change in behaviour, running away from home, lack of self-esteem and confidence, regressive behaviour, attention seeking, hyperactivity, unusual attachment/ clinginess to youth workers or staff, aggression, bullying, temper tantrums, over anxiety or fear, resistance to comfort. The following descriptions of abuse are taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2010) and the indicators are taken from the NSPCC website.

Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Physical Signs:

Bruises e.g. frequent or in unusual places where accidental injuries are unlikely to occur e.g. thighs, shoulders, chest or back, face, or any bruising to pre-crawling, pre-walking children. Bruises in or around mouth –especially in babies or toddlers. Burns. Bone fractures. Serious injuries with no adequate explanation. Frequent accidental injuries. Delay in getting treatment for a child's injury. Or leaving injuries untreated.

Behaviour Signs:

Aggressive behaviour in children. Restlessness or hyper-activity. Fear or overanxiety to please. A child may have frequent absences from school. Child may respond to care givers with resistance to being comforted, or show 'frozen watchfulness' –a heightened awareness by children anticipating further abuse. These behaviour signs may apply in any of the forms of abuse.

Emotional Abuse:

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Physical and Emotional Signs:

May be seen in developmental delay. Child withdrawn, excessively quiet. Sadness. Suicidal ideas. Compulsive stealing. Awareness by outsiders that parent/s or carers seldom interact with, or talk to the child.

Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

Sexual Abuse (Continued):

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

NSPCC say research study showed: 75% children sexually abused did not tell anyone at time happened. 31% still not told anyone by early adulthood. Stranger abuse – another study showed 14% female children and 22% male children were abused by strangers.

Physical Signs:

There may be none but could be pain or physical discomfort, signs of urinary tract infections (UTI) or sexually transmitted infections (STI); under-age pregnancy or parenthood.

Behavioural Signs:

Sexualised behaviour/language inappropriate to child's age/understanding. Knowledge of smells, tastes, physical sensations involved should cause concern. Fear about being left with certain person/s or fear of bedtimes. Self-harming, depression, suicidal thoughts or actions. Eating disorders. Hysteria. Other significant changes in behaviour or personality. Arson (fire setting). Sexual offending. Risk of, or actual prostitution.

Neglect:

Neglect 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 or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

Neglect (Continued):

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, and ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Physical Signs:

Appears frequently hungry e.g. stealing food from other children's lunches at school, begging. Very tired. Pale. Personal hygiene poor e.g. dirty or smelly. Delayed language or motor development. Other physical neglect e.g. rotten teeth. Nappy rash. Poor/inappropriate clothing. Failure to care for child with special medical need. Missing medical appointments. Children left unsupervised in home setting or when out of doors. Child shows repetitive behaviours e.g. head banging, rocking.

Remember:

Research into child abuse demonstrates that NEGLECT and EMOTIONAL abuse have most harmful long-term effects on physical and psychological well-being of children.

Disabled children are twice as likely to become victims of abuse.

Besides the above-mentioned child abuse disclosure, staff should also be alert to any information disclosed about other child welfare concerns, including domestic violence, children with medical needs, child trafficking and drug and alcohol abuse, etc.

Indicators of these welfare concerns are detailed in Appendix 1.

Code of Practice – General

All people working on behalf of Creative Youth, whether in a voluntary, paid or on a contractual basis, will be required to familiarise themselves with this policy, as will visiting companies working with young people.

Any breach of this policy and guidelines shall be treated as a serious matter requiring immediate remedial action on the part of the trustees. Serious acts of suspected misconduct will be reported without delay to the relevant authorities (police, RBK's Safeguarding Children staff etc.) and the person(s) deemed culpable informed clearly, preferably both verbally and in writing, that their presence in any CREATIVE YOUTH activity is suspended forth with pending the outcome of any subsequent enquiry or procedure.

The only time the person deemed culpable will not be informed is if it has been decided as part of a strategy discussion that this would put the young person at further risk.

- All volunteers, trustees and people employed working directly with young people shall have up-to-date DBS clearance. Creative Youth shall keep a record of carrying out checks.
- Respect should always be shown and fostered, between young people themselves and between young people and adults.
- A young person's right to personal privacy shall be respected.
- Always ensure that there are sufficient numbers of workers/volunteers present to prevent a situation arising in which a young person is alone on any premises with just one adult present.
- CY will appoint licensed chaperones as necessary and in line with legal requirements for activity.

Code of Practice – General (Continued):

- Always avoid situations that may compromise your relationship with young people and are unacceptable within a relationship of trust (e.g. sexual relationships between CREATIVE YOUTH staff and young person over the age of consent)

- Remember that caution is required in sensitive moments, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse.

- Do not permit abusive peer activities.

- Any incident or suspicion of abuse must be reported immediately to both Head Safe-guarder and to Creative Youth Chief Operating Officer.

- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.

- Responsible adults must deal with any difficult emotional or violent situation in as calm and detached a manner as possible.

- An individual must not transport young people without the express consent of their parent(s) or guardian.

- Where two or more people acting on behalf of Creative Youth intend to transport young people, they must inform trustees or the Chief Operating Officer of this beforehand.

- Trustees, volunteers and people working on behalf of Creative Youth must avoid favouritism and emotional subjectivity in relations with young people. Pastoral care should be exercised sensitively and thoughtfully.

Code of Practice – General (Continued):

- Do not make suggestive remarks or gestures, even in fun. Any concerns about inappropriate behaviour must be shared with the Head safeguarder and the Chief Operating Officer as soon as possible (or 2 x trustees if the Chief Operating Officer is the party concerned)
- All such concerns must be recorded and dated in a secure file accessible only to the trustees, the Chief Operating Officer and appropriate authorities where necessary.
- A detailed record of actions taken in response to incidents and concerns shall be kept in the same secure file.
- All staff and volunteers should be aware that young people with disabilities may need to communicate their difficulties in a different way and a different approach may be needed.
- A photograph or image of a child should not be published without written consent from a parent/guardian, and personal information of the individual, other than the name, should not accompany the image.
- Creative Youth will ensure all visiting companies hold information on which young people in their organisations can/cannot be photographed and will hold the information in-house for young people they are working with directly.
- Creative Youth will ensure that when organising an exchange, trip or project, we draw up a risk assessment as well as having the child protection policy.
- Before embarking on any residential trip (not a usual activity) with a group of young people Creative Youth will ensure the supervising team have the opportunity to meet and get to know the young people and parents if appropriate. To enable the team to identify any behaviours which may not make them suitable for the trip. If these do become apparent, we will discuss this as a team and make a decision whether or not to take them away

Code of Practice for Digital, Remote and Online Activities:

As we run a hybrid of both physical and online events we will be working both from home and digitally with our young people throughout our different strands of work.

This section provides the guidelines for all Creative Youth staff, freelancers and contractors to keep themselves and the young people they work with safe.

- When working from home staff will have their own accounts to access emails and a log-in to access files. All files are saved on Share-point and files with personal and contact details are password protected.
- No young people's details or images will be downloaded or saved on staff computers and personal mobile phones.
- Staff will not share their accounts or log-ins with other members of staff and only log into their own accounts.
- If young people's images need to be downloaded for photo or video editing then they will be deleted once the edit has taken place and the edited film is uploaded to the charity's server.
- Artists and/or freelancer contractors (e.g. Website Developer) who need access to creative content including videos are given links which enable them to watch videos online but not download.
- Staff will always lock computer or close documents with sensitive information when they are away from their laptops /computers.

Code of Practice for Digital, Remote and Online Activities (Continued):

- Communication via email: Staff will be required to email young peoples' personal email addresses. In such cases staff should use clear language to avoid any misunderstanding on the part of the recipient. Staff should always copy in another staff member for transparency. Staff members who have concerns regarding the content of an email that they send or receive from a young person should consult the DSL for guidance.

- Communication via social media: Creative Youth may use social media during this time to interact with young people. Current social media applications staff will use include Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Contact with young people through such forums should only take place through organisational accounts.

- When communicating with young people via digital platforms, e.g. Zoom, staff will use official accounts.

- Staff, Trustees, and contracted freelancers will be the only adults present in digital platform sessions.

- For any Young People under the age of 16, all parents and/or guardians will be informed of the platforms to be used and the dates and times of sessions and the adults who will be in these platforms.

- Staff will set clear rules of engagement for working on digital platforms. These rules will be in line with the rules of the company when working in person.

- Staff and freelancers will also remind young people that this is not a private space and whatever they share online will be seen by the group.

- Any young person who breaks the above rules will be removed from the platform by staff and parents/carers will be informed.

Code of Practice for Sharing Work Online:

When sharing work created online the charity will take the following steps:

- Share the final edits with the young people and their parents/carers before sharing.
- No use of child's surname in photography or video content.
- Gain parental/guardian consent for their child to be photographed and videoed.
- Only use images of children in suitable clothing to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.
- Only share content through official accounts.
- If, for whatever reason, a parent/carer or young person are not happy with the use of content, then the company will not share the content.

Code of Practice for Collaborating and Working Together Online:

We want to work digitally to connect, create work and support each other. In order to do this we are going to use digital platforms. When using these platforms it is important to protect young people and their families. We will be circulating and asking all to adhere to the below online code of conduct.

Live Video Chat:

- Be kind.
- Make sure people you are living with know you are on a live video chat. Don't include them in the chat.
- Wear appropriate clothing, even on parts of you that you think won't be seen.4.Remember it's easy to misinterpret things online.

Code of Practice for Collaborating and Working Together Online (Continued):

- Refer to a Creative Youth member of staff directly if you feel worried about anything.
- Do not record or take photos of anything without the others content.
- If you are worried about anything message the session leader.

Submitting Videos and Digital Materials:

- Don't film things that might reveal your exact address, school or somewhere you go regularly (e.g. a sports club or activity).
- Wear appropriate clothing.
- Keep yourself safe - don't share something that feels too personal, complicated or sad.

Procedure in Case of Suspected or Reported Abuse:**Situation A - When a Responsible Adult Suspects Abuse:**

1. Inform Head Safeguarder) & / or Chief Operating Officer immediately, who will decide upon further action, contact parent(s) / guardian(s) (if appropriate) and make a full record of the information. The person reporting the suspected abuse should sign the record confirming agreement to the report, which must include the young person's name, contact details and those of the parent / guardian.
2. Ensure that the young person has access to an independent adult such as a youth worker or reliable relative.
3. Take steps to provide a safe environment for the young person deemed to be at risk and attempt to create a calm situation.

Procedure in Case of Suspected or Reported Abuse (Continued):**Situation B – When a Young Person Reports Abuse:**

1. Allow the young person to speak without interruption, accepting what they say. Believe them, often abusers tell their victims that no-one will believe them so there is no point in telling. Listen to them but do not push for information. Make sure that you have enough information to be sure that you are talking about abuse.
2. Vague statements like “he makes me do things” need to be clarified before jumping to conclusions. However, do not probe or investigate.
3. Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation while not passing judgement. Reassure the young person that they were right to tell you. Abusers often tell their victims that they (the child) have done something wrong to invite the abuse and that awful things will happen if they tell.
4. Advise the young person that you will try to offer support but that you **MUST** pass on the information discreetly.
5. Tell the young person what you are going to do next. If there is no cause for immediate concern and the young person is to be allowed home make sure that they have access to support and further help if they need it later.
6. Inform the Head Safeguarder and Chief Operating Officer (minimum of two people) as soon as possible. They will decide on the next steps and will make a proper record of the information. Provide a written record of the incident to them.
7. Ensure that the young person has access to an independent adult such as a youth worker or teacher or relative.
8. In the event of an allegation against a trustee or the Chief Operating Officer, the incident must be reported to at least two trustees & / or Chief Operating Officer not affected by the allegation. As above, the allegation must be properly recorded.

Procedure in Case of Suspected or Reported Abuse (Continued):**Situation C – Receiving a Disclosure Online or Via Mobile Phone**

We recognise that at times, members might disclose information to staff members via texts, calls or digitally.

If a staff member receives a worrying message that they think may indicate that the young person communicating with them is at immediate risk during or outside of work hours, they should immediately refer it for action to an executive staff member (DSL), ideally by speaking to them in person (if the disclosure takes place in working hours) or by phone.

The DSL will follow the procedure below. If the staff member cannot get hold of the DSL, or a more senior member of staff, they should also follow this procedure.

1. Check with the young person –What is happening? Where are you? The staff member should not attempt to solve the problem
2. Contact the young person's parent/guardian, or –if applicable –the social worker/key worker associated with that young person. If there is no response: Alert the emergency services (in most cases this will be the police) by calling 999 and giving as much information as possible.
3. Write up an incident report on the situation within 24hrs to be sent to the DSL.

Important Contact Information:

- **Archie O'Neill** (Creative Youth Co-Director & Head Safeguarder)

Email Contact: ceo@creativeyouthcharity.org

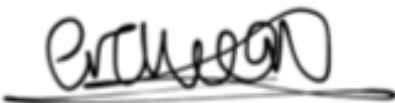
- **Ann Hutchinson** (Leading Child Protection Officer & Trustee)

Email Contact: annwhiteshirt@gmail.com

If the Trustee and/or Chief Executive Officer need to contact RBK Children's Social Care team, they should contact the Single Point of Access (SPA) Team.

You will be asked for your name, address, details of the child and the concerns you have. This helps make further enquiries easier and to contact you again if necessary.

Signed by:



Archie O'Neill

Head Safeguarder & Co-Director

Date: 12/12/2023

Important Contact Information (Continued):

Your details will be treated confidentially and will not be disclosed to members of the family in question without your consent.

If you think a child is in immediate danger, call 999

Children's Single Point of Access (SPA) Team:

(Open 8.00am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, 8.00am to 5.00pm Friday)

Tel: 020 8547 5008

Out of Hours Duty Social Worker:

(Outside of the above office hours – evenings and weekends)

Tel: 020 8770 5000

Complaints Against Creative Youth:

Because Creative Youth employs and manages people who work (paid or unpaid) with children and young people, we have a separate procedure about dealing with allegations against a member of staff/volunteer. In the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff/volunteer, or you have a concern about a member of staff who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards child/children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The concern must be reported to Creative Youth's Child Protection Designated Person immediately. The Child Protection Designated Person will then consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours.

The direct contact for the LADO in Kingston is Viv Rimmer:
020 8547 4609 or 07774 332 675

Child Protection Incident Report:

Name of Child: _____

Date of Birth of Child: _____

Person Reporting: Position: _____

Date of Incident: / / Time of Incident: _____

Full Address of Child: _____

Telephone Contact Number: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (if known): _____

Child Protection Officer Informed: _____

Trustee Informed: _____

Chief Executive Officer Informed: _____

(Please include date and time of when informed, also by who and what position)

Child Protection Incident Report (Continued):

Please list all witnesses / persons spoken to about this incident:

Full Name:	Position (Parent, Staff, etc):	Date: