

Additional safeguarding considerations for projects working directly with children, young people and adults at risk of abuse

This information sheet outlines some of the additional safeguarding procedures the Arts Council expects grant holders to consider putting into place to support the delivery of their funded activities, depending on the nature of their work and/or their beneficiaries. It has been developed with support from the NSPCC and provides (and signposts to) additional information about:

- Location and venues
- Staffing and supervision
- Staff behaviour and codes of conduct
- Managing allegations
- Online safety
- Photography and images
- Licensing
- Requirements for charities

The information provided is not exhaustive. You should seek appropriate, expert advice when developing safeguarding policies and procedures for your organisation or activity.

Locations and venues

You should be familiar with the locations and venues where you will be delivering work from. Venues may have their own safeguarding policy and procedures and you should be aware of them and what is expected of you (eg. what to do if a child or adult at risk goes missing or is unwell).

If you are using your own venue, you should also have procedures in place for health and safety, including fire safety, first aid and emergency situations. You should follow health and safety legislation and guidance, as appropriate. Further information about running an event safely can be found on the [Health and Safety Executive website](#).

When arranging rehearsals (at any venue) you should make sure rehearsal or teaching rooms are open, accessible and well lit. There should be separate changing areas for children of each gender and for adults, and you should be aware of [legislation and guidance relating to child performers](#), if appropriate.

If you are organising activities or trips that may involve an overnight stay, you should ensure you engage with parents/carers about the arrangements and answer any questions they may have. Within the accommodation, you should also ensure there are separate sleeping, washing and toilet areas for adults and children (including older and younger children), as well as boys and girls.

For further information on organising and delivering safer activities and events, please see the [NSPCC website](#).

Staffing and supervision

Supervision levels will vary depending on the children's age, gender, behaviour and the abilities within your group. They will also vary depending on:

- the nature and duration of activities
- the competence and experience of staff involved
- the requirements of location, accommodation or organisation
- any special medical needs
- any specialist equipment needed.

Adults at risk may also have specific needs including medical needs or mobility support.

If a child is taking part in a performance and they won't be supervised by their parent, school teacher or home tutor, they must be supervised by a chaperone. All chaperones need to be approved by their local council – whether they are paid or unpaid. Further information is available on protecting children in entertainment on the [National Network for Children in Employment and Entertainment \(NNCEE\) website](#), and from the [NSPCC website](#).

There is no specific guidance on staffing ratios when supervising children, but you can find further information on recommended ratios on the [NSPCC website](#). If workers are expected to individually supervise or have one-to-one contact with a child or vulnerable adult, then you should consider having a Lone Working Policy in place for your organisation. Further information on lone working with children can be found on the [NSPCC website](#).

Staff or volunteers who have not had the required criminal record checks should not be left in sole charge of children or adults at risk. You can find further information about safeguarding considerations for volunteers on the [NCVO website](#).

Staff behaviour and codes of conduct

Setting out expectations of behaviour can help to ensure your staff and volunteers understand what is required of them and how to avoid putting themselves in a difficult situation. Typically, these expectations should be set out in a code of conduct, or behaviour code, and be part of your organisational policies, procedures and standards for effective safeguarding and child protection.

You should have a separate code of conduct, or behaviour code, for adults and for children. You can access further information, including example behaviour codes, from the [NSPCC website](#).

Managing allegations

Any allegation or concern that an employee or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child must be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly, regardless of where the alleged incident took place. Ensure that you have a procedure in place for managing any allegations made against staff or volunteers. These might include, for example, allegations that they have behaved in a way that has harmed, or might have harmed, another young person or member of the group.

You can find further information about managing allegations of abuse on the [NSPCC website](#). If you have concerns about a child, you can also contact the NSPCC by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk or by calling 0808 800 5000.

Children can contact ChildLine on 0800 1111 or at www.childline.org.uk.

Allegations or concerns about behaviour towards an adult at risk should be reported to Adult Social Care. Many organisations have helplines or advice relating to concerns about adults at risk. A list of telephone helplines and forums has been published on the [NHS website](#).

Online safety

If your project or programme of work involves online deliver (either wholly or in part) then you will need to consider the ways in which you do this safely. Having online contact with potential recipients or participants can increase inclusion and involvement, but you will need to consider any online contact with children and adults at risk, including use of social media, ensuring there is clarity about acceptable and unacceptable online content and conduct.

Further information on keeping children safe online can be found on the [NSPCC website](#). We have also published links to a range of resources on digital inclusion, online accessibility and safeguarding on our [website](#).

The [Online Safety Act 2023](#) also places new legal duties and responsibilities on online service providers to keep children and young people safe online.

Photography and images

If you are using (or obtaining) photography and/or recordings of your activity then you will need to consider how consent for photography and/or filming is obtained, and content used, to support or publicise your project or programme of work. For more guidance on the use of photography and the sharing and storage of images, see the [NSPCC website](#).

Licencing

If a child under school leaving age is part of a performance, they may need a licence. This includes children taking part in:

- films, plays, amateur dramatics, concerts or any public performance that the audience pays to see
- performances that take place on licensed premises
- sporting events or modelling assignments where the child is paid

The Department for Education has published advice for those working with children in certain types of performances or activities in England, which can be accessed [here](#).

Further information on performance licences and legislation can also be found on the [NNCEE website](#).

Requirements for charities

There are additional safeguarding responsibilities for charities, which are outlined in the Charity Commission's safeguarding strategy (2017). This states that safeguarding should be a key governance priority for all charities – regardless of size, type or income – and not just for those working with children or groups traditionally considered at risk.

It is an essential duty for trustees or other governing body to take reasonable steps to safeguard beneficiaries and to protect them from abuse. You should refer to the

[Charities Commission website](#) for a full list of policies, procedures and practices that should be in place.

This information sheet was last updated on 15 April 2024.