



Policy for the Safeguarding of Children and Young People

1. Introduction

1.1. At The Forum, Norwich we are committed to ensuring a safe environment for all visitors. Every year we welcome thousands of children and young people to our site. Many of these visit as part of organised groups or with family and friends. While the primary responsibility for the child or young person rests with the supervising adult, we provide an atmosphere of trust and respect, recognising that children and young people have a right to protection.

1.2. We will refer any child protection issues to the appropriate agencies. In particular if we encounter a case that constitutes, or we believe might constitute, a criminal case against a child the police will be informed by the Designated Safeguarding Officer/Facilities Manager.

1.3. It should be noted that children entering The Forum without direct supervision should be welcomed if they are behaving appropriately. We reserve the right to deny access to children under the age of 14 years old, if unaccompanied by an adult.

1.4. We also wish to protect staff from unfair allegations: the guidelines in this policy will ensure that there is no doubt over what our obligations are and what standards we expect.

1.5. This policy will apply to all permanent and temporary staff and any volunteers/freelancers supervising or solely in charge of children at The Forum. It also covers the provision of outreach activities and events at other locations.

1.6. This policy has been drafted with Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board.

2. Legal background

2.1. This policy has been written taking legislation and guidance from The Children's Act 1989 and 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013. This policy will be reviewed annually in light of any changes in legislation.

2.2. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), which replaces the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from involving work with vulnerable groups, including children.

3. Policy Statement

3.1. As a provider of learning outside the classroom, we support the work of the Children's Commissioner for England and actively promote and support the rights of children under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and also other international human rights agreements.

We believe that:

- the welfare and interests of children are paramount
- all visitors without exception have the right to protection from abuse
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- all staff, contractors and volunteers should be clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and responses and have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate person.

We will ensure that:

- we promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- staff and volunteers understand their role and responsibilities in terms of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults
- staff and volunteers are provided with appropriate learning and development opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, or other concerns regarding children, young people and vulnerable adults
- policies and procedures regarding safeguarding responsibilities are available to all visitors.

4. Responsibilities

4.1. The Forum's Designated Safeguarding Officer, currently Learning Manager Sarah Power, will be responsible for administrative procedures relating to the selection and induction of staff and for advising on any disciplinary action.

4.2. The Forum's Designated Safeguarding Officer will monitor the implementation of the policy and take appropriate action on any breaches within their areas of responsibility.

4.3. All Forum staff have a responsibility to maintain appropriate standards of behaviour and to report lapses in these standards by others. Any concerns or reasonable suspicions of abuse should be reported to line management.

4.4. Any allegations of inappropriate behaviour should also be reported to The Forum's Designated Safeguarding Officer. He or she will liaise with police and social services as necessary.

4.5. The role of The Forum's Designated Safeguarding Officer will be to:

- assess information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about as appropriate
- consult with Local Authority Designated Officers at Norfolk County Council
- make a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police.

4.6. It is not the role of The Forum's Safeguarding Officer to decide whether a child has been abused or not – this is the task of the social services department which has this legal responsibility, or of the police.

5. Selection

5.1. All appointments will be conditional on a satisfactory check of the applicant's criminal record. For most posts a standard check via the DBS will be sufficient although an enhanced check will be required for applicants regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of children.

5.2. A risk assessment should be carried out for each post prior to appointment by the appropriate line manager to determine the level of access to children and vulnerable adults.

5.3. Where appropriate, posts will be excluded from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and applicants will be required to declare all past criminal convictions (and any current or pending investigations) prior to interview.

5.4. All appointments will be subject to satisfactory employer/personal references and a satisfactory probationary period.

5.5. At interview applicants will be required to account for any gaps in employment history.

6. Learning and Development

6.1. We will provide and explain the content of this policy to all new staff in the course of the induction process.

6.2. Basic child protection awareness training will be given to all appropriate members of staff.

6.3. Any individual need for more detailed guidance and training for both new and existing staff should be identified by the managers and will be provided/facilitated by the Safeguarding Officer.

6.4. Enhanced child protection awareness training will be given to any members of staff with regular contact with children. This will include staff working on specific projects with children and young people and those supervising youth forum groups as well as demonstrators and outside contractors where appropriate.

7. Guidance

7.1. This child protection policy is available to all Forum staff.

8. Review date

Current Policy: July 2017

Approved by: SP/ TB

Date of next review: July 2018

Responsibility: Sarah Power