



WE MAKE CULTURE CIC Safeguarding Policy (Children and Young People)

Reviewed by	Laura Brewis
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1.0 Our statement

We Make Culture is a social enterprise, based in Sunderland, delivering high quality music-making programmes across the city. Our mission is to bring people together through music, supporting the development of creative confidence and increasing people's capacity to fulfil their potential and be heard. We believe that taking part in culture should not be a function of a person's social or economic circumstances and that talent and potential are everywhere, but opportunity to participate and flourish is not.

Our work strives to change this, by targeting our work in places with least opportunity and supporting them to thrive. We are committed to working long term with people, communities, and organisations, believing that it takes time to develop and nurture meaningful relationships and trust. Our work is led by the needs of participants, and we believe in learning, reflecting, and adapting our approach as we go.

1.1 Our Safeguarding Commitment Statement:

At We Make Culture, we believe that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind and that as an organisation, we have a responsibility and a commitment to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them.

1.2 Our Commitment in practice:

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

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people, a deputy and a lead director for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance

- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns

1.3 Our policy sets out to:

- protect children and young people from harm. This includes the children of adults who use or engage in our services, our audiences, and includes our staff and volunteers.
- provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

1.4 This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of We Make Culture (WMC), including:

- All children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in WMC's activities whether in or outside of school, in community groups and venues or as a member of an audience.
- all employees, senior managers, directors, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, interns, agency staff and students and any other individual working on behalf of, or association with WMC.

1.5 Equality Statement

WMC believes that it is the right of all people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, to have access to WMC's work. WMC is committed to ensuring that all young people, staff and volunteers have the same protection regardless of these factors.

WMC will treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity. WMC recognises that some children and young people face barriers to engagement. WMC is committed to doing all that it can to reduce those barriers to ensure that everyone is afforded the same protection through WMC's safeguarding policy.

1.6 Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation and guidance is as follows:

- The Children Act 1989
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child 1992
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Education Act 2002

1.7 Supporting documents

This policy statement should be read alongside WMC's organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

- role description for the designated safeguarding officer
- dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person
- managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- recording concerns and information sharing
- child protection records retention and storage
- code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- behaviour codes for children and young people

- safer recruitment
- whistleblowing

1.8 We Make Culture's Nominated Child Protection Leads:

- Nominated child protection lead name: Laura Brewis
laura@wemakeculture.co.uk
07805188129
- Deputy child protection lead(s) name(s): Rebecca Young
beccy@wemakeculture.co.uk
07930193274
- Director lead for safeguarding and child protection name: Marie Nixon
marie.nixon@gmail.com
07734650821

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. This policy was last reviewed on:

Date: 1st August 2023



Signed: Laura Brewis
Date: 1st August 2023

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Role Description for Nominated Safeguarding Lead

We all have a responsibility to keep children safe. We Make Culture's nominated child protection lead, Laura Brewis, has additional responsibilities in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people involved in the organisation. The nominated child protection lead is the point of contact for anyone in the organisation who is concerned about a child. The role is also responsible for leading on:

- developing and reviewing We Make Culture's safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.
- implementing We Make Culture's safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures: ensuring all safeguarding and child protection issues concerning children and young people who take part in We Make Culture's activities are responded to appropriately.
- ensuring that everyone working or volunteering with or for children and young people at WMC, including the board of directors, understands the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures and knows what to do if they have concerns about a child's welfare.
- making sure children and young people who are involved in activities at We Make Culture, and their parents/carers, know who they can talk to if they have a welfare concern and understand what action the organisation will take in response.
- receiving and recording information from anyone who has concerns about a child who takes part in We Make Culture's activities.
- responding to information that may constitute a child protection concern, including a concern that an adult involved with We Make Culture may present a risk to children or young people. This includes: a. assessing and clarifying the information b. making referrals to statutory organisations as appropriate c. consulting with and informing the relevant members of the organisation's management d. following the organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- liaising with, passing on information to and receiving information from statutory child protection agencies such as: a. the local authority child protection services b. the police. This includes making formal referrals to agencies when necessary.
- storing and retaining child protection records according to legal requirements and the organisation's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures.

- working closely with the board of directors to ensure they are kept up to date with safeguarding issues and are fully informed of any concerns about organisational safeguarding and child protection practice.
- report regularly to the board of directors on issues relating to safeguarding and child protection, to ensure that child protection is seen as an ongoing priority issue and that safeguarding and child protection requirements are being followed at all levels of the organisation.
- being familiar with and working within inter-agency child protection procedures developed by the local child protection agencies.
- being familiar with issues relating to child protection and abuse and keep up to date with new developments in this area.
- attending regular training in issues relevant to child protection and share knowledge from that training with everyone who works or volunteers with or for children and young people at We Make Culture.
- attending team meetings, supervision sessions and management meetings as arranged.
- working flexibly as may be required and carry out any other reasonable duties.

Appointment to this role is subject to satisfactory vetting and barring checks.

2.1 Wider staff and volunteer responsibilities

All staff, workers and volunteers at We Make Culture have a responsibility to safeguard and protect children and young people from harm. There are some clear responsibilities across all staff and volunteers within the organisation:

i. Understanding disclosure and dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person.

Children and young people may disclose abuse in a variety of ways. It can be very hard for children and young people to speak out about abuse. It's vital that children and young people are able to speak out to We Make Culture staff and volunteers, and that whoever they tell takes them seriously and acts on what they've been told. Even if a child doesn't tell someone verbally about what's happened to them, there may be other indicators that something is wrong.

It is the responsibility of WMC staff and volunteers to understand that children and young people may disclose abuse in a variety of ways, including:

- directly– making specific verbal statements about what’s happened to them
- indirectly – making ambiguous verbal statements which suggest something is wrong
- behaviourally – displaying behaviour that signals something is wrong (this may or may not be deliberate)
- non-verbally – writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in other ways.
- Children and young people may not always be aware that they are disclosing abuse through their actions and behaviour. Sometimes children and young people make partial disclosures of abuse. This means they give some details about what they’ve experienced, but not the whole picture. They may withhold some information. Adults need to be able to notice the signs that a child or young person might be distressed and ask them appropriate questions about what might have caused this.

ii. **Understanding signs of abuse.**

Signs of abuse aren’t always obvious, and a child might not feel able to tell anyone what’s happening to them. Sometimes, children don’t even realise that what’s happening to them is abuse. There are different types of child abuse and the signs that a child is being abused may depend on the type.

Common Signs of Child Abuse

- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- becoming withdrawn
- seeming anxious
- becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
- poor bond or relationship with a parent
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- running away or going missing
- always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

iii. **Helping children/young people disclose abuse.**

It's important to create an environment where children and young people are comfortable about speaking out if anything is worrying them. They need to:

- be able to recognise abuse and know it is wrong
- know who they can talk to about it

Make it as easy as you can for young people to find and take up the offer of help.

- Reinforce positive messages about those who seek help – seeking help is a sign of strength
- Encourage parents to support their children and seeking help
- Be positive about young people, the capacity for change and their resilience
- Listen to the people you help – improve your services using feedback from service users
- Shout about your work – lack of awareness is a significant barrier to young people seeking help.
- See the whole person – engage with young people both in terms of their strengths and their weaknesses
- Build trust - treat people with respect
- Help young people to help each other – equip young people with the skills and tools to support their friends/peers and family members
- Consider the role of new technologies – these should be complimentary to other ways of supporting young people

iv. **Responding to Disclosure**

- show you care, help them open up: give your full attention to the child or young person and keep your body language open and encouraging. Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important. Phrases such as 'you've shown such courage today' help.
- take your time, slow down: Respect pauses and don't interrupt the child – let them go at their own pace. Recognise and respond to their body language. And remember that it may take several conversations for them to share what's happened to them.
- show you understand, reflect back: Make it clear you're interested in what the child is telling you. Reflect back what they've said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it's their experience.

- it's important to maintain an unbiased approach when responding to disclosures to ensure each case is treated in a fair and transparent manner and that the child gets the protection and support that they need.
- It's important to keep accurate and detailed notes on any concerns you have about a child. You will need to share these with your nominated child protection lead.

v. **Create a safe environment**

Arts activities can take place in a variety of settings. But wherever you are, there are things you can do to make the environment as safe as possible. You should:

- Provide separate changing areas for children of each gender and for adults
- Make sure rehearsal or teaching rooms are open, accessible and well lit
- Ensure the activity is suitable for children to be involved in (for example no nudity, bad language or sexual content)
- Everything you do is appropriate for the youngest or most vulnerable person (this could be due to age or stage of the child's development)
- Any physical contact is appropriate, justifiable, agreed by the child and approached sensitively
- You should also ask the children's opinions and encourage them to speak out about anything that's worrying them

vi. **Working with audiences**

If you perform to an audience, you also need to consider their wellbeing. Make sure your front of house team know what to do if:

- a child is taken ill
- a child in the audience gets lost or goes missing
- they have a concern about a child's wellbeing.

vii. **Working with parents**

It's important for parents and carers to be fully informed about:

- the nature of the work you're doing with their child
- the young person's role
- the commitment required
- the behavioural expectations of children and young people

- the times of all gigs or rehearsals, especially if plans change

viii. **Supervision**

It's vital that children are appropriately supervised at all times. You must make sure that the adults who work or volunteer with children are the right people to do so, and that you've carried out the necessary checks with appropriate staffing and supervision ratios.

ix. **Working with parent supervisors**

Parents may volunteer to help out with supervision. Unless they are only supervising their own children, or have a private arrangement with another child's parents, you need to carry out the same checks as for any other volunteer.

3.0 Staff Behaviour Code when working with WMC's Children and Young People:

This behaviour code outlines the conduct that We Make Culture expects from all our staff and volunteers. This includes trustees, agency staff, interns, students on work placement and anyone who is undertaking duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid. The behaviour code is there to help us protect children and young people from abuse. It has been informed by the views of children and young people. is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our activities has seen, understood and agreed to follow the code of behaviour, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour

At WMC, you are acting in a position of trust and authority and have a duty of care towards the children and young people we work with. You are likely to be seen as a role model by young people and are expected to act appropriately. We expect people who take part in our services to display appropriate behaviour at all times. This includes behaviour that takes place outside our organisation and behaviour that takes place online.

3.1 Responsibility of staff and volunteers

You are responsible for:

- prioritising the welfare of children and young people

- providing a safe environment for children and young people to ensure equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose
- having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate.
- following our principles, policies and procedures including our policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection, whistleblowing and online safety
- staying within the law at all times
- modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow
- challenging all inappropriate behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour code to Laura Brewis, Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour, following our safeguarding and child protection procedures -this includes inappropriate behaviour displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age.

3.2 Respecting children and young people:

You should:

- listen to and respect children at all times
- value and take children's contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible - if you need to break confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures, it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity.

3.3 Diversity and inclusion

You should:

- treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- understand that children and young people are individuals with individual needs
- respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to the group/organisation
- challenge discrimination and prejudice
- encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

3.4 Appropriate relationships

You should:

- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- avoid showing favouritism
- be patient with others
- exercise caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- ensure your contact with children and young people is appropriate and relevant to the nature of the activity you are involved in
- ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people - if a situation arises where you are alone with a child or young person, ensure that you are within sight or can be heard by other adults or if a child specifically asks for or needs some individual time with you, ensure other staff or volunteers know where you and the child are
- only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible - unless it has been agreed that the provision of personal care is part of your role and you have been trained to do this safely

3.5 Inappropriate behaviour

When working with children and young people, you must not:

- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- take unnecessary risks
- smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- develop inappropriate relationships with children and young people
- make inappropriate promises to children and young people
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive - including having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person
- let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or postal address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- patronise or belittle children and young people
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.

3.6 Appropriate use of photography

When working with children and young people, it may be necessary to take photographs or videos for documentation purposes. When taking photos/ videos, you must:

- Check that appropriate permissions have been given by a responsible adult for images to be taken
- Share them with the project lead at the first possible opportunity and delete from your own devices

Never share images of children and young people taken while working on a WMC project via.

personal channels or personal social media.

3.7 Upholding this code of behavior

You should always follow this code of behaviour and never rely on your reputation or that of our organisation to protect you. If you have behaved inappropriately, you will be subject to our disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you might be asked to leave We Make Culture. We might also make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services. If you become aware of any breaches of this code, you must report them to Laura Brewis, Rebecca Young or Marie Nixon. If necessary, you should follow our whistleblowing procedure and safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Our organisation must take any concerns raised about staff or volunteers seriously, regardless of who the person is, how long they've been involved with the organisation, or whether they are directly employed by us.

WMC will not attempt to investigate the matter, but will gather the facts of the case and keep written records.

If an allegation is made that a staff member or volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

WMC will report this immediately to the relevant agencies, for example the [NSPCC helpline](#) on 0808 800 5000, your local child protection services in Sunderland on 0191 520 5560 (Monday to Thursday, 8.30am to 5.00pm and Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm) or contact the Out of Hours team on 0191 520 5552 (available 24 hours Saturday and Sunday) or the police in an emergency on 999

4.0 What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about a dangerous or illegal activity or any wrongdoing within their organisation. Raising a concern is known as "blowing the whistle" and is a vital process for identifying risks to people's safety. Sharing information or talking through a concern can be the first step to helping an organisation identify problems and improve their practices.

A Whistleblowing Advice Line was commissioned by the Home Office. It is a direct response to the recommendation for "a new whistleblowing national portal for child abuse related reports" set out in the Government's Tackling child sexual exploitation report.

The Whistleblowing Advice Line isn't intended to replace any current practices or responsibilities of organisations working with children. We encourage you to raise any concerns about a child to We Make Culture in the first instance. However, we understand that isn't always appropriate. If you have any concerns about a child in your workplace you should raise this with one of WMC's safeguarding leads in the first instance.

However, you should contact the Whistleblowing Advice Line if:

- you think your concern won't be dealt with properly or may be covered-up
- you've raised a concern but it hasn't been acted upon
- you're worried about being treated unfairly.

To contact the NSPCC's Whistleblowing Advice Line, call 0800 028 0285. It's free and confidential.

5.0 Recording Concerns and Information Sharing

Sharing information about a child's welfare helps professionals build a clearer picture of the child's life and gain a better understanding of any risks the child is facing. Information sharing helps to ensure that an individual receives the right services at the right time and prevents a need from becoming more acute and difficult to meet (DfE, 2018a).

You must always have a clear and legitimate purpose for sharing a child's personal information. Keep a record of the reasons why you are sharing or requesting information about a child or their family.

You should also make sure you are not putting a child's safety and welfare at risk by sharing information about them.

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Always seek consent to share information about a child and their family. However, if consent isn't given, you can still share information with relevant professionals under certain circumstances, for example if you are protecting a child from significant harm. The [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#) do not affect this principle.

5.1 What information to share

Make sure you share the information quickly and securely. The sooner you report your concerns the better. This means the details will be fresh in your mind and action can be taken quickly.

Identify how much information should be shared. This will depend on the reasons for sharing it.

Use language that is clear and precise. Different agencies may use and understand terminology differently.

Make sure the information you are sharing is accurate. Make it clear what information is factual and what is based on opinion (yours or other people's).

5.2 Reporting concerns

If a child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, you can share information with appropriate agencies or professionals without the child's or their parent's consent

If a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

If a child is not in immediate danger:

Follow your organisation's safeguarding policies and procedures as soon as possible.

These should provide clear guidelines on the steps you need to take if a child discloses abuse. They will state who in your organisation has responsibility for safeguarding or child protection and who you should report your concerns to.

Member of We Make Culture staff/volunteer suspects a child is being (or is at risk of being) neglected/ abused OR discloses that they are being neglected/ abused

Member of We Make Culture staff report concerns by phone to Nominated Safeguarding Lead, Laura Brewis on 07805188129 or to Safeguarding Deputy Rebecca Young on 07930193274.

Staff should record their findings as soon as possible, within 24 hours, using the 'Safeguarding Concern Notification' form, return a copy for their own records and email this to the senior designated child protection lead,

6.0 Safeguarding Concerns Notification Form

Note: please do not interpret what is seen or heard, simply record the facts. After completing the form please pass on immediately to the safeguarding officer.

Name of relevant individual	
Name of person completing the form	
Date of disclosure	
Place of disclosure	
Please Record the nature of incident, details of disclosure, safeguarding concerns and any relevant background information. Please record the individuals words verbatim where possible. (Continue on additional sheet if necessary).	
Action taken	
Signed	
Date	

