

Streets Ahead Collective CIC Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



A PROTECTION POLICY FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

**Agreed on SEPTEMBER 29th 2025
Renewal date – September 2026**

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This policy statement outlines Streets Ahead Collective CIC's Child Protection Policy for all workers (including staff, contractors, consultants, volunteers and board members) who may have contact with young people, children and vulnerable adults. For the purposes of this policy the term '**children**' includes children, young people under 18 and vulnerable adults.

Streets Ahead Collective CIC has a legal and moral duty to create and maintain the safest possible environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults to enjoy all arts related projects and other recreational, social and leisure pursuits provided directly by the company or in partnership with other agencies and/or community voluntary sector organisations.

At Streets Ahead Collective, safeguarding is not just a policy—it's a promise. We are committed to creating a space where everyone feels safe, supported, and empowered to express themselves freely.

The procedures are designed to protect children from any harm and abuse, to ensure that children who wish to report any kind of abuse or harm are listened to and this is acted upon and to protect workers from placing themselves in vulnerable positions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY:

1. To ensure that all staff and volunteers (legally responsible adults) working with children are carefully selected, understand and accept responsibility for the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults in their care.
2. Every workshop session has a member of staff who holds an enhanced DBS.
3. To raise awareness of child protection issues amongst all trustees, staff and volunteers.
4. To ensure that the child's welfare is of paramount importance, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs, when planning, organising, advising and delivering children's activities.
5. To respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, and to ensure confidential information is restricted to the appropriate management structure within the company. To raise the awareness of relevant staff, partner organisations and volunteers of child protection issues.
6. To ensure the policy is approved and endorsed by the Board of Directors.
7. To monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis.
8. To ensure that the principles of this policy are adopted by all our partner organisations, contractors and volunteers, through the adoption of this policy, or their own organisation's policy, which meets the same level of determination with regard to child safety.

Creating a Safe Environment

1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Elizabeth Wellstead and Lucy Stockwell and Vicky Dyball undertake regular safeguarding training.
- 2.
3. Staff and volunteers working with children should be appropriately trained and qualified to ensure the safe provision of services, instruction and use of equipment
4. All staff and volunteers working with children or vulnerable adults, must be accompanied by a supervisor holding an enhanced DBS. Paper copies are kept in a locked cupboard at Rock Paper Scissors.
5. Staff and volunteers should read part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education [Keeping children safe in education 2025: part one](#) and Directors to read full version Keeping Children Safe in Education [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#) . Records evidencing this to be checked at the start of the academic year and Safeguarding updates are on the agenda for all meetings, and training.
6. Staff and volunteers working with children should carefully plan activity sessions with the care and safety of children as their primary concern including the use of activities appropriate for the age and abilities of the workshop participants.
7. Wherever possible, staff and volunteers should avoid being alone with a child, including offering lifts.
8. Staff and volunteers should work with children in a non-intrusive manner.
9. Workers should not find or place themselves in situations where there is unsafe equipment or materials, inadequate partner staff support, or work for which they do not have enough training or experience.
10. Project planning should ensure the skills of the worker match the needs of the situation.

What is a Child?

In law, a child is defined as up to and including the age of 18 in The Children Act, 1989. Extensions of this exist for children who are disabled and for those in local authority care settings.

Vulnerable Adults

There is no standard definition. Vulnerable adults are people who are, or may be, in need of community care services because of mental disability or other disability, age, illness, and who are, or may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

This policy and guidance applies equally to trustees, staff and volunteers working with vulnerable adults although the terms child or children are used.

Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of staff and volunteers

Each member of staff or volunteer at Streets Ahead Collective CIC is responsible for acting on safeguarding concerns. Do not assume that someone else will raise an alert. If in doubt, always raise an alert so that a decision can be made and recorded.

The Safeguarding Lead will review all alerts regularly, checking that actions, decision and outcomes have been recorded and identifying any training needs or emerging trends. They will write a quarterly report for review by the Board of Directors.

A director will be designated as Safeguarding lead for the Board, who will attend safeguarding training at least every three years and lead on scrutiny of the quarterly reports against policy and helping the Board to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. Every member of the directors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education annually

This list below is not comprehensive and staff and volunteers may be asked to undertake other duties deemed necessary to fulfil their jobs.

- We are committed to fostering a culture where everyone—regardless of background, identity, or role—feels valued, supported, and safe
- Staff and volunteers planning sessions should comply with the standards set by their appropriate professional body, e.g Arts Council England, charities and schools.

- Staff and volunteers must give due regard to issues of safety at all times.

Staff and volunteers are responsible for familiarising themselves with building/facility safety issues, such as, The Health & Safety Handbook, fire, procedures, location of emergency exits and first aid equipment.

Staff and volunteers are responsible for reporting suspected cases of child abuse to the appropriate authorities

It is not the responsibility of staff or volunteers to try and deal with suspected abuse

The external organisation, will be expected to keep an attendance register for all organised sessions.

The organisation will have access to any parent consent/emergency consent forms for all children taking part in the organised sessions, and this information should be treated as confidential and is governed by the Data Protection Act 2018

Staff in drop in sessions do not collect data of those attending

Staff, or the volunteer in charge, should ensure their work sessions start and end on time.

Staff and volunteers are expected to promote, demonstrate and incorporate the values of fairness, trust and ethics throughout the session and course of their activities.

The Board of Directors should ensure that staff, volunteers and contractors are adequately insured, to protect against claims of negligence, through their organisation, or through their own personal insurance if staff are acting as self-employed agents.

Types of Child Abuse

Physical abuse involves hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, throwing, suffocating or anything else that causes physical harm to a child.

Emotional abuse involves the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child, which could cause long-lasting ill-effects on the child's emotional development. It can involve telling a child that they are worthless or unloved, causing a child to feel frightened or in danger (for instance, through witnessing violence), or exploiting and corrupting a child.

Sexual abuse involves enticing or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities (whether or not the child is aware of what is happening) or encouraging a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. This can include both physical and non physical contact. It may involve a

child looking at or taking part in the production of pornographic material, or watching sexual activities.

Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological need, which may result in damage to the child's health and development. It can involve failing to provide food, clothing or accommodation or failing to get medical help when needed

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group).

The Internet Staff and volunteers should be aware that abuse can occur through the Internet in various forms, both directly and indirectly. Online platforms can be used to perpetrate emotional, sexual, and even physical abuse. This includes, but is not limited to:

- **Online grooming**, where an adult builds a relationship with a child to exploit or abuse them.
- **Cyberbullying**, which can have serious emotional and psychological impacts.
- **Exposure to harmful content**, such as violent, sexual, or extremist material.
- **Sexual exploitation**, including the sharing of indecent images or coercion into sexual activities.
- **Online coercion and threats**, which can lead to offline harm.

Staff and volunteers should remain vigilant to these risks and understand that disclosures may relate to online interactions or experiences. Abuse carried out via digital means is just as serious and harmful as abuse occurring in person and should always be handled with the same level of concern, sensitivity, and response.

Signs of Child Abuse

These are signs, which could alert staff and volunteers to the fact that a child might be being abused or at harm and could include:

1. Unexplained bruising and injuries
2. Sexually explicit language and actions
3. Sudden changes in behaviour
4. Something a child has said

5. A change observed over a long period of time e.g losing weight or being increasingly dirty or unkempt
6. Self-harm or mutilation, talking of suicide
7. Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about

If a child displays any of these signs it does not necessarily mean that they are being abused. Similarly there may not be any signs; you may just feel something is wrong. If you are worried, it is not your responsibility to decide if it is abuse, but it is your responsibility to act upon your concerns and do something about it by reporting it appropriately.

What do you do if a child discloses to you?

1. If a child discloses to you – do not further question the child but ensure that the child is safe.
2. Remain open to the disclosure: do not appear shocked or disbelieving (even if you feel it). Allow the child to feel secure and give them time to talk.
3. Never promise them that you will keep what they say secret. But do reassure them that you will act on their behalf to ensure only those who need to know are told. REMEMBER – the procedures after disclosure can seem more frightening to the child than the alleged abuse, they may have been threatened that something bad will happen to them if they tell.
4. Only speak of the allegation to those to whom you must refer. Only discuss this with those who need to know to safeguard the child. Confidentiality is still essential except for the line of referral.
5. Record accurately everything that you have been told, observed and/or have actioned by whom, where, when, using the child's own words (do not interpret what they have said).
6. Remember overall that the child's welfare is paramount

Do Not

1. Rush into details that may be inappropriate
2. Make promises you cannot keep
3. Take sole responsibility – consult someone else so that you can protect the child and gain support for yourself

It is NOT the responsibility of staff or volunteers employed by Streets Ahead Collective CIC to assess the accuracy of an allegation, but it is their responsibility to pass on any information that may affect the physical and emotional welfare of a child. The next section will detail what methods of communication that are open to staff and volunteers in the event that they would like to report any suspicions or concerns, or to report a disclosure.

Communicating Child Protection Issues or Concerns

This section will detail what methods of communication that are open to staff and volunteers in the event that they would like to report any suspicions or concerns, about a child's emotional or physical welfare.

During School Workshops

- a) The **staff, freelance employee or volunteer** should communicate their concerns to the **Workshop Leader** immediately.
- b) The **Workshop Leader** and **freelance employee or volunteer** should then report their concerns, or the disclosure to the **Teacher** or **Adult** in charge of the group.
- c) As soon as is practicably possible the **Workshop Leader** and **freelance employee or volunteer** should together complete a Child Protection Incident Report Form.
- d) The **Workshop Leader** should report as soon as practicably possible to the **DSL** of Streets Ahead Collective CIC, who will assess the situation and, after seeking advice, will alert the **Headteacher** of the school, **Social Services** or other authorities if need be.

During Public/Community Workshops

- a. The **staff, freelance employee or volunteer** should communicate their concerns to the **Workshop Leader** immediately.
- b. As soon as is practicably possible the **Workshop Leader** and **staff, freelance employee or volunteer** should together complete a Child Incident Report Form.
- c. The **Workshop Leader** should report as soon as practicably possible to the **DSL** of Streets Ahead Collective CIC, who will assess the problem and, after seeking advice, will alert the, **Social Services** or other authorities if need be.

Action that Staff, Freelance Employees and Volunteers should NOT take

- a) **staff, freelance employee or volunteer** must NOT contact the friends or family of the child or disclose any information to them.

- b) The **staff, freelance employee or volunteer** are NOT responsible for contacting **Social Services** themselves, this will be the responsibility of the **Director**.
- c) The **staff, freelance employee or volunteer** must NOT communicate with, nor confront any individual(s) accused of abuse.
- d) The **staff, freelance employee or volunteer** are not personally responsible for providing any form of protection or respite from an abusive or potentially abusive situation. They must not put themselves into a position of unnecessary risk.

If Staff, Freelance Employees and Volunteers suspect a colleague of abusing a child

- a) The **staff, freelance employee or volunteer** should communicate their concerns to the **Workshop Leader** immediately.
- b) If the concern is with regards to the **Workshop Leader** then they should report directly to the **Director** of Streets Ahead Collective CIC, who will deal with the issue.
- c) In the event that this is still not possible, it is advised that the **staff, freelance employee or volunteer** pass the issue onto the NSPCC by contacting the helpline. The NSPCC will advise on what action they can take, or they will take the issue anonymously and process the Child Protection referral themselves.

Dealing with potentially URGENT or EMERGENCY situations

In the event that any **staff, freelance employee or volunteer** suspects that the child is in immediate danger the situation should be treated as an EMERGENCY. In such circumstances they can take the following action:

- a) The **staff, freelance employee or volunteer** should contact the emergency services (999).
- b) The **staff, freelance employee or volunteer** must not, under any circumstances confront or contact the accused, or talk to friends and/or family of the abused.
- c) If unsure, the **NSPCC** or the **Kent Contact and Assessment Service** can always advise on the action to take in an emergency situation

The Kent Contact and Assessment Service 08453 302967

Can offer advice and direct you to the relevant local services who can help.

If you are worried about the safety of a child or young person in Kent, please contact the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership on 03000 419191.

Raising an Adult Safeguarding concern

Email

social.services@kent.gov.uk

Phone

[03000 41 61 61](tel:03000416161)

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Phone (out of hours)

[03000 41 91 91.](tel:03000419191)

(NSPCC) - National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

- a) Telephone: **0808 800 5000**
- b) Email: **help@nspcc.org.uk**
- c) Website: **www.nspcc.org.uk**
- d) The helpline is a free-phone number (except mobile phones) and the caller can be anonymous.

The call to the NSPCC helpline will NOT appear on any itemised bill. The advisors at the NSPCC are highly trained and will be able to give advice on the next course of action to take. They can also give advice on spotting the signs of abuse.

Establish Confidential Records of Concern

When a child protection concern arises, it is essential that a record is kept of what is said or seen and what action was taken. These records are extremely sensitive and should be kept in a locked cabinet or securely on-line with access only for the DSL.

Behaviour Guidelines for Staff and Volunteers Working with Children

All staff and volunteers that work with children have a responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children involved in any Streets Ahead Collective CIC activity. Project-specific guidelines will be provided as part of project briefing. All training will be reviewed annually.

Staff and volunteers should:

- a) Set examples of appropriate behaviour and should avoid using sarcasm, discrimination, negative criticism, labelling, and so on.
- b) Collaborative Safety: work together to build trust and mutual respect. Every voice matters, and every concern is heard
- c) Positively encourage good behaviour and discourage inappropriate behaviour.
- d) Show respect for children and colleagues at all times and be sensitive to the feelings of individuals.
- e) Should treat all children fairly at all times.
- f) Abide by the Streets Ahead Collective CIC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy at all times.

Staff and volunteers should NOT:

- a) Physically punish any child that they are working with.
- b) Humiliate or belittle any child.
- c) Use inappropriate language and humour or act in any way that could be considered offensive or inappropriate.
- d) Deprive any child of food or other necessities, nor unreasonably deny them access to basic facilities for health and hygiene.
- e) Put themselves or any child into a position of risk. This includes being left alone with children unnecessarily. Additional guidelines will be provided for any projects that are likely to include one-to-one contact.

Photography

Appropriate rules need to be set in line with the service being provided. Formal permission should be obtained for the use of any images or filmed footage of a child, young person or adult taken during a workshop situation as these are classed as personal information and as such are governed by the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018. Photographs of adults and children taken in a public place do not require permissions to be obtained before using the images unless they are to be used for a commercial use, when formal release forms will need to be obtained.

Named Persons

Children and parents should have a 'named person' to whom they may report any worries or concerns. On most occasions this will apply to the appropriate workshop leader/ teacher/parent in any given workshop.

Monitoring and Reviewing the Child Protection Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually. However, during any transition period regarding new legislation, the DLS at Streets Ahead Collective CIC will monitor ISA guidelines and to ensure compliance and best practice.

Further Contacts and Useful numbers

Keeping Arts Safe

The Arts Council has produced an in-depth guide, produced in collaboration with the NSPCC, which looks at the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in arts activities. It includes a model for risk management (page 20). It is available to download from: [Safeguarding and child protection | Arts Council England](#).

Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

This sets out the way in which all organisations working with children should seek to work together and have clear procedures on child protection, in line with the local Area Child Protection Committee

[Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance](#)