

**CHILD & VULNERABLE PERSON PROTECTION POLICY COMMITMENT**

Brighton Fringe Ltd is aware that there is a need by company members and staff to have a thorough understanding of the responsibilities held when working with children and vulnerable adults to promote the welfare, safety and protection of children and vulnerable people at all times.

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as being up to the age of 18 years old. Extensions of this exist for children who have special needs

**Brighton Fringe is committed to:**

* A belief that all children and, regardless of age and background, have at all times and in all situations, the right to enjoy their respective event activities
* Valuing, respecting and listening to children and vulnerable adults, and to provide a safe environment for children, vulnerable adults, staff and visitors
* Recruiting staff safely, ensuring all checks as deemed necessary are made
* Adopting child and vulnerable adults protection systems and procedures for Staff
* Providing a common understanding of child and vulnerable adults protection issues in planning and practice
* Sharing child and vulnerable adults protection information and practice with staff, children and parents/carers and guardians and such Agencies who need to know
* Providing effective management of staff through supervision, support and training and to provide adequate resources to implement this policy and to see, that it is communicated and understood
* To review this commitment as appropriate to reflect new legal and other regulatory developments

**POLICY REMIT**

The welfare, safety and protection of children and vulnerable people is of paramount importance and we believe that every child and vulnerable adult regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual identity, has the right to be protected from abuse and harm at all times during activities organised and managed directly by Brighton Fringe.

Child protection is the responsibility of every adult who has an involvement with children. It is the duty of all staff and volunteers working for Brighton Fringe to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of all children with whom they come into contact through the course of their employment.

Adults working with children and vulnerable adults must be provided with safeguards and made aware of best practice so that they can be protected from wrongful allegations.

This policy applies to all employees, contractors and volunteers of Brighton Fringe.

**AWARENESS AND PREVENTION**

Employees, contractors and volunteers working for Brighton Fringe recognise that there are four main types of abuse suffered by children. These are physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. An extended category list of all such abuses is found on appendix 1.

All Brighton Fringe employees and volunteers have been made aware of Brighton Fringe’s child and vulnerable adult protection policy and guidelines.

Through awareness and good practice, Brighton Fringe employees and volunteers can minimise the risk of abuse to children and vulnerable adults and also protect themselves against false allegations of abuse.

Brighton Fringe is committed to careful planning of appropriate activities for children and vulnerable adults in order to minimise situations where abuse could occur.

**RECRUITMENT**

Brighton Fringe employees and volunteers will be carefully selected, trained and monitored to ensure that children with whom they may come into contact are protected.

It is recognised that abuse is facilitated when an abuser can find an opportunity to be alone with a child or other vulnerable person. The risk that abuse may occur where an abuser can maintain regular contact in order to build a relationship with the child or other vulnerable person. Whenever possible we will encourage an “open environment” avoiding private or unobserved situations discourage the keeping of secrets.

It is the policy of Brighton Fringe that, at present, staff are not responsible for looking after children. A teacher, a parent or other appropriate adult should always accompany children or vulnerable people and Brighton Fringe employees, contractors and volunteers should not therefore find themselves in a situation where they are alone with a child. It is therefore not necessary for Brighton Fringe employees, contractors or volunteers to be checked with Disclosure and Barring Service as a matter of course.

**TRAINING AND SUPERVISION OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

New staff and volunteers will have a designated person (supervisor) that will ensure that a proper induction takes place. The supervisor will provide support to a new member of staff and volunteer in all areas of their work including child protection. All new staff and volunteers will read and understand this policy as part of their induction process. Staff and volunteers will be able to identify the signs of abuse and will be confident about the steps to take and who to report any concerns.

**CREATING A CARING AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

Brighton Fringe employees and volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults will ensure the safe provision of services and use of equipment. Activities will be carefully planned to ensure the care and safety of children and geared to their age and ability level.

Children and vulnerable adults will be treated with respect and employees and not be exposed to any racist, sexist or any other remarks which upset or humiliate.

It is the responsibility of employees/volunteers to prevent the abuse of younger or weaker children by older or stronger children through bullying, cruelty or any other forms of humiliation.

Arrangements for parents/ carers dropping off and collecting children from activities need to be clearly stated and agreed by parents/carers, children and employees or volunteers.

**PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO ETC**

Formal permission from parents or carers must be obtained before taking any images.

**RISK ASSESSMENT**

Risk assessment will be undertaken prior to any offsite visits or new types of activities.

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Visits by Schools and Groups will be advised to carry out their own risk assessment to highlight any potential areas of risk and devise strategies to manage such risks. This would normally be compiled during a preliminary visit with guidance available from Brighton Fringe Management.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

The Duty Manager is responsible for ensuring the fire risk assessment is undertaken and implemented. Escape routes must be checked daily and fire extinguishers are to be maintained and checked annually.

**REPORTING PROCEDURES**

It is not the responsibility of employees or volunteers to deal with suspected abuse but it is their responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate person.

If a company member receives an allegation of abuse against another company member/volunteer they should promptly inform the designated company child protection officer (for information on the referral procedure see appendix 2), including date and time of what has occurred and the time the disclosure was made. The names of the people involved and what was said and done by whom must be recorded together with any action subsequently taken.

Concerns will normally be shared with parents or carers as soon as possible.

APPENDIX 1

**SIGNS OF ABUSE**

**POSSIBLE SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE**

* Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
* Improbable excuses give to explain injuries
* Refusal to discuss injuries
* Untreated injuries
* Admission of punishment which appears excessive
* Fear of parents being contacted
* Withdrawal from physical contact
* Flinching at sudden movements
* Arms and legs kept covered
* Fear of returning home
* Fear of medical help
* Self-destructive tendencies
* Aggression towards others
* Chronic running away

**POSSIBLE SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

* Physical, mental and emotional development delay or disturbance
* Admission or punishment which appears excessive
* Over-reaction to mistakes
* Sudden speech disorders
* Fear of new situations
* Inappropriate emotional responses to stressful situations
* Neurotic behaviour

(E.g. rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)

* Self-mutilation
* Fear of parents being contacted
* Extremes of passivity or aggression
* Drug/solvent abuse
* Chronic running away compulsive stealing
* Scavenging food or clothes
* Enuresis/encopresis (bedwetting/soiling)

**POSSIBLE SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE**

* Sudden changes in behaviour or school performance
* Displays of affection in a sexual way inappropriate to age
* Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
* Tendency to cry easily
* Regression to younger behaviour, such as thumb-sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby
* Complaints of genital itching or pain
* Distrust of a familiar adult or anxiety about being left alone with a relative, baby-sitter or lodger
* Unexplained gifts or money
* Depression and withdrawal
* Apparent secrecy
* Wetting day or night
* Sleep disturbances or nightmares
* Chronic illness, especially throat infections or venereal disease
* Anorexia or bulimia
* Unexplained pregnancy
* Fear of undressing for gym
* Phobias or panic attacks

**POSSIBLE SIGNS OF NEGLECT**

* Constant hunger
* Poor personal hygiene
* Constant tiredness
* Poor state of clothing
* Emaciation
* Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
* Untreated medical problems
* Destructive tendencies
* Low self-esteem
* Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
* No social relationships
* Chronic running away
* Compulsive stealing
* Scavenging for food and clothes

**APPENDIX 2**

### **FLOW CHART - REFERRAL**

Designated person for child protection to decide whether to discuss with the parents carers or make a referral to:-

* Local authority social services
* Local Education Authority
* NSPCC
* Police

Promptly inform the designated company child protection officer

If designated person for child protection in the company is not available contact one person/agency in this order:-

* Child protection officer for hosting organisation
* Local authority social services
* Local Education Authority
* NSPCC
* Police

Also notify the designate company child protection officer after referral if unable to contact them first.

Company member/volunteer has a concern about safety/welfare of a child

**Approved: 14th December 2016**

**Approved by: Julian Caddy, CEO**

**Reviewed date: 14th August 2020
Next review: 1 August 2021**