

## **CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON PROTECTION POLICY**

### **CONTEXT “affection, protection, direction”**

A) Children and young people grow up today in a world where they are targets, for example :- targets for the sale of confectionery, fast and processed foods (child obesity has doubled over the past decade, and today 26.7% of 11-15 year old girls and 24.2% of 11-15 year old boys qualify as obese) targets for the sale of clothing and fashion accessories (advertising for which may portray children and young people in provocative and sexual attitudes) targets for the sale of music CD's, and DVD's (which may convey racist, sexist, or violent messages).

B) Children and young people grow up today in a world where they may learn - both from the media (TV, Internet, and electronic games) and from personal experience - that violence is normal.

C) Children and young people grow up today in a world where they may experience discrimination - on the grounds of sex, race, religion or disability - from an early age.

D) Children and young people grow up today in a world where they may be bullied or abused by other children and young people and / or bullied or abused by adults.

The Black-E (Connecting artists and communities) aims in its work to provide a safe context - an oasis - where children and young people are freed from the pressures, stresses, and abuses outlined above. This aim is summed up by The Last Poets (the legendary forefathers, or grand fathers, of today's rap generation) in their memorable affirmation of “affection, protection, direction”. This affirmation confirms that children and young people are :-

\* to be respected and welcomed (affection),

\* to be made to feel safe and secure (protection), and when the above are in place children and young people may choose

\* to take part in activities, and accept counselling and guidance (direction).

### **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

In order to realise these aims - and recognising that the safety and well being of the child and young person is paramount - The Black-E has drawn up a Child And Young Person Protection Policy. A comprehensive set of procedures is associated with this Policy which has been determined to protect children and young people and staff. Detailed guidance in respect of this Policy is provided by 13 individual policies, policies and practice, and guidelines (see Appendix C).

The creation of this Policy was initiated through a risk analysis covering all (and more) of the areas of risk outlined in the foregoing Context.

All members of this organisation are required to adhere to this policy.

The development of this Child and Young Person Protection Policy is ongoing, and is supported by appropriate training, monitoring and evaluation.

This policy will be reviewed annually. Children and young people will be involved in this review. The Child and Young Person Protection Policy is available to children and young people for reading, reflection and discussion. Appropriate contacts, including Childline and the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline, are also accessible and available. Where children and young people are at risk The Black-E recognises the following definitions and analysis of abuse.

## **DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE**

A child or young person is considered to be abused or at risk of abuse when basic needs are not met through avoidable acts of either commission or omission. In other words there is a recognition that abuse is not necessarily a physical act but can occur in a variety of ways including through omitting to act.

The latter is particularly prevalent in cases of neglect and failing to act when it is known (or suspected) that a child is being abused.

## **TYPES OF ABUSE**

We recognise SIX main areas, which cover most if not all abuse:-

### **i) PHYSICAL ABUSE**

Any form of physical injury to a child, where there is a definitive knowledge or a reasonable suspicion that injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented by a person having actual custody of or contact with the child. It is recognised that the seriousness of the injury is in itself an unreliable indicator of the risk to the child, and actual diagnosis of abuse may require diagnosis made by professional workers.

### **ii) VERBAL ABUSE**

This may take the form of direct sexist or racist comments, or abuse relating to religious beliefs or disability. Such abuse may also be tacit or covert, or revealed through tone and articulation rather than the words themselves. Such abuse may also be revealed through silence - for example, through an adult speaking to one child or young person while ignoring another.

**iii) NEGLECT**

Also known as failure to thrive. Persistent or severe neglect of a child or young person (e.g. cold, starvation, or over-feeding through disregard of diet) which results, either actually or potentially, in seriously impairing the child's or young person's health and development. This is of particular concern with very young children where their life could be threatened. Diagnosis may require the attention of professional workers.

**iv) EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Behaviour on the part of an adult which seriously limits the children's or young persons' emotional development. This may include:-

- \* Persistent hostility
- \* Persistent failing to respond to the child or young person
- \* Serious unrealistic expectations (these may be over or under expectations)
- \* Extremely inappropriate stimulation of a child's or young person's sexuality or aggression
- \* The serious exploitation of a child or young person to gratify another's needs
- \* Grossly inconsistent care
- \* Exposure to inappropriate stimulants, including internet sites and chat rooms

**v) SEXUAL ABUSE**

This involves children and young people taking part in (or being exposed to) sexual activities that they may not understand, that they cannot give informed consent to, which violate social taboos within families, or which are against the law.

**vi) SELF ABUSE**

Self abuse by children and young people includes, but is not limited to, self harm, substance abuse, drug addiction, and eating disorders. Diagnosis and treatment is most likely to require the attention of professional workers.

**IN CONCLUSION, THESE CATEGORIES ARE NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE AND A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON MAY BE AT RISK FROM ONE OR MORE FORMS OF ABUSE.**

Some forms of abuse - for example physical abuse - may be immediately recognised as abuse by a child or young person. Other forms of abuse - for example receiving inappropriate messages from an internet site - may not be recognised as abuse by a child or young person without appropriate guidance from an adult.

MINIMISING RISK GUIDELINES have been accepted as follows:-

- a) Avoid putting a child, young person or member of staff in a position of vulnerability.

Workers should endeavour to ensure that they are not left alone with children or young people where there is little or no opportunity for the activity to be observed or visited by others. This approach requires careful planning and use of facilities to ensure that others can observe or visit the activity.

- b) Avoid working in a way which involves ongoing term isolation of any individual from other members of staff, children or young people.

- c) Ensure that a first aid trained member of staff is present at all times.

- d) Ensure safety and security when transporting children and young people, including vehicle safety and appropriate staff presence.

- e) Avoid inappropriate physical contact between staff, children and young people.

- f) Avoid, wherever possible, disciplining children and young people through physical contact or extreme language.

- g) All young people should be made aware of the Child And Young Person Protection Policy (see section 2 above), and there is a designated member of staff/management on hand should a child want to specifically discuss anything contained in the document or raise an issue in relation to child protection.

- h) All would-be staff and volunteers are treated as job applicants for all positions involving contact with children and young people, and at least one reference is sought from a person who has experience of the applicant's contact with children and young people.

All applicants for paid work are appointed through a structured interview, and volunteers travelling from outside the area are interviewed on arrival (following earlier correspondence and submission of c.v.). Where possible (e.g., it is not always practical with volunteers or staff from abroad) enquiries are conducted to find out whether an applicant has any conviction or a record of criminal offences against children.

This is done through an appropriate agency such as the Criminal Records Bureau, Ofsted, or Fair Play For Children.

ALL PAID AND VOLUNTARY APPOINTMENTS ARE CONDITIONAL ON THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF AN APPROPRIATE PROBATIONARY PERIOD. A MIDTERM REVIEW TAKES PLACE DURING THIS PROBATIONARY PERIOD, AND A FINAL REVIEW CONCLUDES A SUCCESSFUL PROBATIONARY PERIOD.

Where a volunteer is involved in a short term engagement, they are assigned a finite task or tasks, and supervised as though it were a probationary period.

### **DISCLOSURE AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

See also Appendices A and B.

GUIDELINES have been accepted as follows in relation to disclosure and confidentiality:-

Stay calm, DO NOT express shock or embarrassment

DO NOT promise to keep a secret

DO convey to the child or young person that you believe her / him

Do use simple language

Do reassure the child that she / he is behaving appropriately in making the disclosure

Listen, but initially do not ask leading questions or probe for information

Explain what you will do next in a way that the child or young person can understand

Follow procedure and report as soon as possible

Record fully all that was said.

### **APPENDIX A**

Please note the term MEMBER OF STAFF refers to both paid and unpaid workers.

1. WHAT TO DO IF .....There is a suspicion of child abuse but NO DIRECT DISCLOSURE (i.e.: if a member of staff or management has suspicion)

**ACTION**

1i) Discuss with the staff team. Using the team's knowledge of the child or young person and her / his circumstances, try to establish if there is a satisfactory explanation for the concern. If this is the case then no action may be taken. If the concern continues then

1ii) Observe what you see and hear. Record it accurately, sign and date the record.

1iii) Inform your line manager/designated contact person

1iv) Contact Social Services. Clarify whether they will report back to you on their actions. Record all conversations, social workers' names and date and sign them.

2. WHAT TO DO IF ..... The child or young person discloses abuse (as a victim) to a member of staff or management.

**ACTION**

2i) Listen carefully and sympathetically to what the child or young person says. DO NOT make comments.

2ii) Do not make the child or young person tell anyone else at this point. The child or young person however NEEDS to know that he / she will have to speak with others about the allegation in the future.

2iii) Do not question the child except to clarify what they have said.

2iv) Record exactly what has been said, sign, date and record.

2v) Inform your line manager / designated contact person.

2vi) Inform Social Services ; they will advise you what action they will take and what you should do next.

2vii) Do not assume that a parent/carer is or is not part of the abuse. However, if a parent/carer is involved in the abuse and is aware that the child or young person has told someone, pressure may be applied on the child to retract the disclosure.

2viii) The Police and Social Services may identify you as a trusted adult to support the child through the investigation. This would always involve the child's or young person's consent.

2ix) Make clear notes with the dates of conversations, events and actions, and sign and date all the records.

3. WHAT TO DO IF .....A disclosure of known abuse of a child or young person is made by a carer or relative to a member of staff or management

### **ACTION**

3i) If it is a child or young person disclosing (not as a victim) then follow the procedure as in 2 above. Be aware of the possibility that the child or young person disclosing may themselves have been abused and may be in need of support.

3ii) If it is an adult disclosing then you should explain your role and that Social Services will need to be involved. If an adult discloses but refuses to contact Social Services then YOU should contact Social Services.

3iii) iii Inform your line manager / designated contact person.

3iv) Your role should be supportive, to encourage or go along with the person to Social Services.

3v) The responsibility then becomes that of the Social Services. The member of staff should be part of any interview that may follow.

3vi) Clear, signed records of conversations / events should be taken and dated.

4. WHAT TO DO IF... The suspicion or knowledge of abuse is voiced by a third party (including another child or young person)

### **ACTION**

4i) Share and discuss in the team.

4ii) If it is a child or young person voicing suspicion follow the disclosure procedures as in 2 above.

4iii) If an adult has voiced suspicions encourage them to inform Social Services (using the Project's resources). If an adult feels unable to or refuses to inform Social Services of their suspicions then you should inform Social Services without identifying the individual.

4iv) Explain what will happen next.

4v) Clear, signed records of conversations / events should be taken and dated.

4. WHAT TO DO IF... An adult or child discloses that they are abusing a child.

### **ACTION**

5i) Explain that you cannot keep such disclosures confidential.

5ii) Explain what will happen next.

5iii) Make clear notes with dates and times of all discussions and actions, date and sign.

5. WHAT TO DO IF ..... A member of staff has an allegation made against them.

### **ACTION**

6i) If the allegation is from a child follow procedure 2.

6ii) If it is from an adult tell them what will happen next. Record, date and sign all information.

6iii) Record details of the allegation.

6iv) Inform your line manager / designated contact person immediately  
**WITHOUT PREJUDICE**

6v) **DO NOT** inform the staff member concerned that an allegation has been made against them at this stage.

6vi) Social Services should be contacted and an investigation undertaken by the appropriate agencies.

6vii) There should be no financial implications for the member of staff throughout the investigation.

6viii) The member of staff should not return to the site, subject to the outcome of the investigation.

NOTE a) 6iv) and 6vi) should be dealt with as quickly as possible and must take priority over all other work.

b) Strict confidentiality should be maintained (see appendix B). The line manager / designated contact person should be the point of contact during the initial investigations. Management committees will need to be informed

that an investigation is taking place, but details need not be made available to them.

7. WHAT TO DO IF.....There is a suspicion that a child or young person is themselves an abuser.

### **ACTION**

- 7i) If the disclosure is from a child then follow the procedure 2.
- 7ii) If the disclosure is from an adult, then follow the procedure 4.
- 7iii) If the suspicion is from a member of staff then follow procedure 1
- 7iv) If the concern continues follow procedure 1 APPENDIX B –

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

1 If a child or young person approaches you, you are the individual to take the disclosure. DO NOT involve another member of staff.

2. All records are to be kept locked & no general access.

3. In child or young person protection issues NEVER identify the child or young person by name and always maintain a separate locked file with no general access.

4. Family members etc., should not be granted access to these files.

### **5. NO SECRETS**

The child or young person needs to know that you CANNOT keep secrets. You can however involve people who can make the situation better. Always reassure that anything the child or young person says will only be made available to those involved in making the situation better.

8. Contacts

**THE Black-E: Maria Paul/Deputy Director is the Designated Officer**

SOCIAL SERVICES CONTACT : CHILD PROTECTION UNIT

In office hours : via Liverpool Direct 233 3000

Out of hours : Emergency Duty Team 524 1165

CHILDLINE Free confidential counselling service for children wishing to discuss abuse Free phone: 0800 1111 website: <http://www.childline.org.uk>

NSPCC CHILD PROTECTION HELPLINE Free confidential counselling service for children wishing to discuss abuse Free phone: 0808 800 5000 website: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR VOLUNTEERING Publications and advice on volunteer based issues Carriage Row, 183 Eversholt Street, London NW1 1 UB.

### **APPENDIX C**

Informing and guiding the Child And Young Person Protection Policy are :-

#### **Policies and Practices**

- I. Working Alone In Safety
- II. Code Of Professional Conduct
- III. Developing Safe Working Practices
- IV. Health And Safety
- IV. Staff Development
- V. Safe From Harm
- VI. Sexuality
- VII. Drugs And Alcohol
- IX. Detached Youth Work
- VIII. Violence At Work Educational Visits Health And Safety Policy Statement And Guidance I.

#### **Forms 1-6 Educational Visits Checklist**

- LEA Notification (Form 1)
- Risk Assessment (Form 2)
- Parental Consent (Form 3)
- Summary Contact Checklist (Form 4)
- Visit Education Form (Form 5)
- Educational Visits Tracking (Form 6)
- Accident Reporting Form (ACC1)
- II. Health And Safety Unit
- III. Safety In Outdoor Education

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